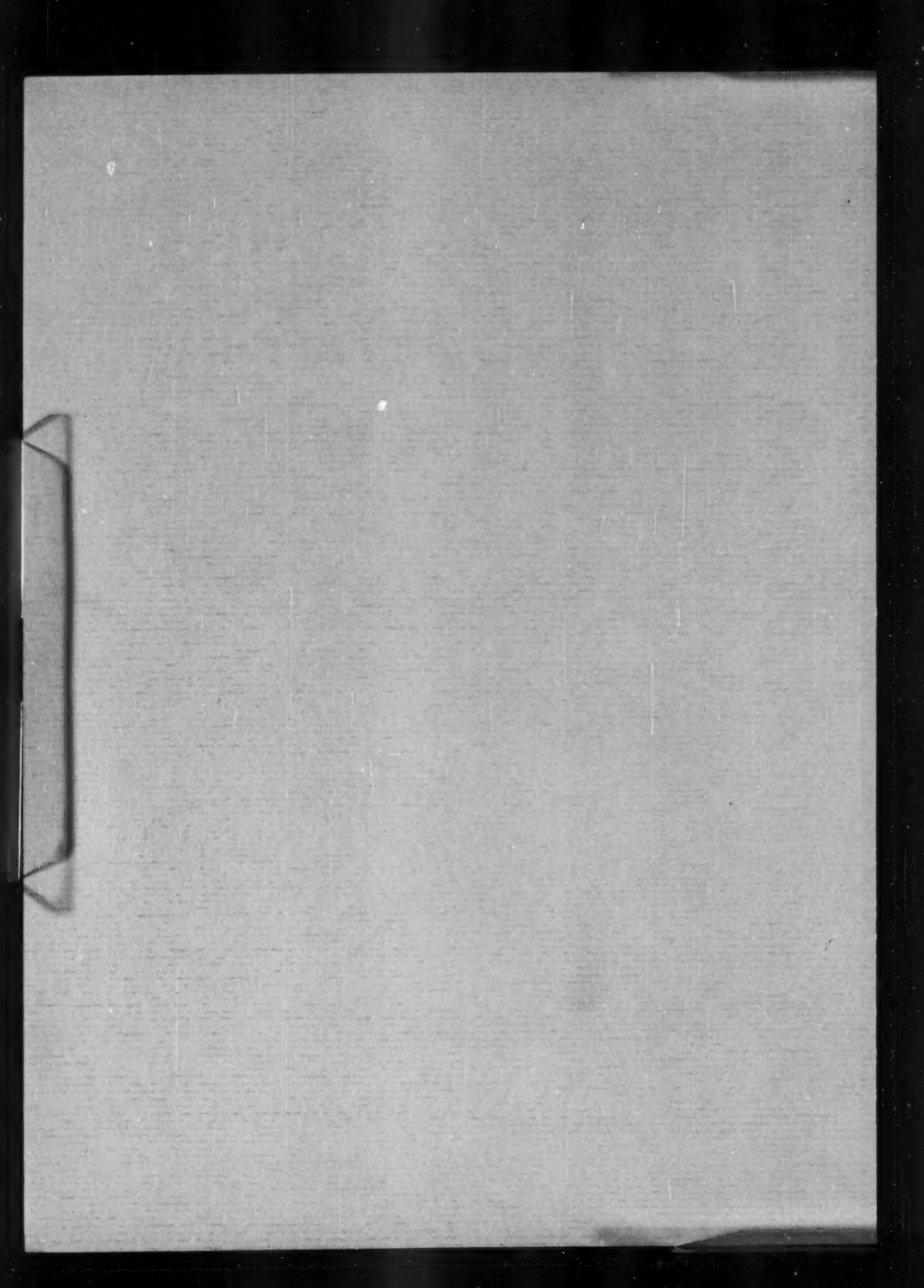


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# *The* ART *Quarterly*

SPRING 1949

**PUBLISHED BY THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS**





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# The ART Quarterly

PUBLISHED BY THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

*Edited by* W. R. VALENTINER *and* E. P. RICHARDSON  
*Assistant Editor* PAUL L. GRIGAUT

## CONTENTS

Orcagna and the Black Death of 1348. Part II	
By W. R. Valentiner	113
Peter Rindisbacher: Frontier Reporter	
By John Francis McDermott	129
Of the Proximity of Death and Its Stylistic Activations: Roger de la Fresnaye and Juan Gris	
By Ethlyne J. and Germain Seligman	147
The Hydra Reborn in the New World	
By Marius Barbeau	156

### SHORTER NOTES

William Blake's Debt to James Gillray	
By David V. Erdman	165
The Sañchi Torso: Iconography and Style	
By Benjamin Rowland, Jr.	170
Again the Simonetta Bust	
By William E. Suida	176
Recent Important Acquisitions in American Collections	182

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THE ART QUARTERLY

SPRING, 1949



*Fig. 1. ORCAGNA WORKSHOP, St. Michael (polychrome wood)  
American Private Collection*

## ORCAGNA AND THE BLACK DEATH OF 1348. PART II\*

By W. R. VALENTINER

### I

THE Tabernacle of Or San Michele was erected by the Compagnia of this church in remembrance of the liberation from the Black Death in 1348. It was meant to form a frame for a beautiful, life-size *Madonna* painting by Bernardo Daddi but developed instead into an independent work of sculpture, which could be viewed from all four sides. The enormous sum of 86,000 florins, Ghiberti tells us (Vasari raised the amount to 96,000 in his second edition), was paid for it. When Orcagna received the order he must have been well known to the commissioners as an excellent sculptor who was particularly fitted to execute such a unique and costly undertaking. As he became capomaestro of Or San Michele in 1355, the work was probably begun about this time, the date 1359 on the relief of the *Death of the Virgin* indicating the completion of this section while the whole tabernacle was not finished until much later. Orcagna received payments until 1366. The artist was nearly fifty when he began the work. It is most likely that some earlier works of sculpture by him are still in existence.

Vasari says that Orcagna started with sculptural work in his early youth and became a pupil of Andrea Pisano. If he is right—and we shall see presently that there is a strong possibility that he is—Orcagna was by nature a sculptor. It is probably not accidental that his most important creation, still extant, the Tabernacle of Or San Michele, happens to be a piece of sculpture. It is true that in the inscription on the main relief he calls himself "pictor" and signs without epithet on the altarpiece of S. Maria Novella; but Vasari, who undoubtedly knew more works by Orcagna than we do, says that he liked to call himself "pictor" in his signature on his sculptures and "sculptor" on those of his paintings. But even if Orcagna preferred to designate himself more frequently "pictor," this does not invalidate our premise. On the contrary, he may have done so precisely for the reason that painting was the art which did not come to him as easily as sculpture and that he wished to excel as painter as well as sculptor. The unfortunate criticism directed against his painting by some modern students stems undoubtedly from the fact that it is judged more from the standpoint of the painter than from that of the sculptor who adapted his paintings to his style of sculpture. It may be that he tried to merge opposing

\* See volume XII, p. 48, for Part I.

principles, as Toesca claims, but to condemn his paintings for this reason is unjustifiable since they are in any case creations of a great personality.

The fact that he did not enter the guild of masons and woodcarvers until 1352, almost ten years after he had entered the painters' guild (1343), proves little one way or another. In his time the mere fact of entrance into a guild seldom meant the inception of an artist's career, as it came to mean in later periods; if he joined the guild it was a matter of convenience, neglected frequently by the artists in early life. The guild regulations were not as severe as in the fifteenth century, due to the chaotic conditions which resulted in a rather disorderly registration of guild members around the middle of the fourteenth century.

An instance of this tardy or belated registration in the guild is the example of Francesco Neri Ubaldi, called Sellaio, thus far only known from documents, who worked on a statue of St. John the Evangelist for the cathedral in 1354 (Poggi, no. 1), at least two years before he entered the guild. I believe this statue can be recognized in the large marble figure in the Bargello which is still standing on the original pedestal with the Evangelist's name on it and which concurs stylistically with the date of Sellaio's commission (Fig. 3). It had been erroneously attributed to Piero di Giovanni Tedesco until Kauffmann recognized its much earlier style and close relationship to Orcagna.<sup>1</sup> The type, with high forehead, fanatical expression, stylized braids of hair and clear-cut, angular folds of drapery is so related to some of the figures on the tabernacle that we can discern in the maker of the statue one of Orcagna's assistants. This conclusion is further borne out by the fact that Orcagna vouched for Sellaio when the latter entered the guild in 1356.<sup>2</sup> This is just the time when, as we have seen, Orcagna started to work on the tabernacle. Sellaio appears again later, between 1363 and 1383, when he executed a now lost series of prophets and angels of small size for the main portal of the cathedral; 1383 being the year he was dismissed, probably because of advanced age, as he was unable to finish the statuette of an angel which was later completed by Jacopo di Piero Guidi.<sup>3</sup> It is a pity that we have no other works by this interesting artist, who must have been born about 1320, except possibly the Orcagnesque Madonna statue over the portal next to the Campanile, which is unfortunately too damaged to permit a definite attribution, and some statues high up above the Porta dei Cornacchini which have not yet been photographed in detail.

Another of Orcagna's assistants on the tabernacle was undoubtedly his younger brother, Matteo, who became a member of the guild of masons and



woodcarvers in 1358,<sup>4</sup> and accompanied Orcagna the next year to Orvieto. In the documents he is mentioned only as a sculptor of whom Ghiberti does not think very highly. As the Orcagna *bottega* produced a good deal of wood sculpture in Florence, as we shall presently see, it is very probable that Orcagna included such work from his activity in Orvieto. A large *Annunciation* in the Domopera there shows all the characteristics of his style, but the treatment, especially of the Virgin, is too weak for the master himself. That this *Annunciation* was executed by Matteo di Cione is therefore quite possible (Fig. 2).

Orcagna must also have employed assistants for the less essential parts of the tabernacle, for we have no reason to question Ghiberti's statement that the master himself executed all the reliefs pertaining to the life of the Virgin. Ghiberti writes clearly: "concluse di sua mano tutte le storie di detto lavoro," thus omitting all free standing statuettes and the decorative parts. There is no doubt that there is an uneven quality in some of the statuettes of prophets and angels as compared to the standard of the reliefs, but it is hard to distinguish the hand of the pupil from the master, since the spirit is entirely Orcagna's, who probably worked over the pupil's work. Modern criticism, however, holding with the effectiveness of stylistic analysis over incontrovertible historical data, maintains that the whole of the tabernacle was executed largely by pupils and assistants from drawings by Orcagna.<sup>5</sup> Probably Ghiberti drew his information directly from Orcagna's closest relatives, several of whom were still alive in his time. It is highly improbable that the commissioners would have tendered such an enormous sum for the tabernacle without the major part of it being the work of Orcagna himself.

How great was his interest in this undertaking we learn from the documents which tell us that even after he had accepted the position of capomaestro at the Orvieto cathedral, the tabernacle not being quite finished, he returned repeatedly to Florence to work on it, to the annoyance of the Orvietans who in the end dismissed him for that very reason.

The tabernacle has two main views: the front view which forms the frame for the enchanting and colorful painting by Bernardo Daddi, and the rear view which is entirely sculpture and in its way is as important as the front, especially when the door to this side of the street is open. Here we see the "grande basso rilievo" representing the *Death and Assumption of the Virgin*, a relief the dimensions of which had never before been attempted in Tuscany, and rarely after. Around this relief, which is most likely all Orcagna's work and contains the self-portrait praised by Ghiberti, as well as the artist's signature, the whole

composition of this elaborate sculptural symphony is built up, which includes numerous small reliefs of the life of the Virgin and additional statuettes of angels and prophets relating to her glorification. And as is natural in a work celebrating the liberation from the Black Death, the death scene and the Transfiguration in heaven are most prominent, the former being nearest the spectator. The artist, inclined to a pessimistic conception of life, could here express with all the psychological power at his command, the ordeal and suffering through which the people of the city and he, himself, had passed. The sorrow of the apostles standing by the dying Virgin is not conveyed by extravagant gestures but with restrained, though none the less convincing and affecting, attitudes. They do not throw their arms into the air, as we see in earlier representations, but press their wringing hands towards their mouths, hold their cheeks with both hands or lift their arms slightly in front of their breasts with gestures of horrified astonishment. The faces with the half-opened, crying mouths and the eyes closed and blinded with too much weeping, are embodiments of deep despair. The mass of spectators pressed close together behind the death-bed with its wide expanse of white linen, seems like soaring waves of an ocean filled with endless mourning before an empty beach.

A reflection of the death-bed scene can be found in the finely executed predella of the *Death of King Henry II* for the altarpiece of S. Maria Novella, which was painted at the same time (finished in 1357). Here the bystanders wear the court dress of the period found in the *Adoration of the Kings* section of the Tabernacle; the young king is attired in the same tied trousers and richly bordered mantle as the knight to the right in the predella scene. The types are very similar and characteristic of Orcagna—which we must remember if we want to attribute other sculptural works to him—types with high, broad foreheads, long, straight noses, high upper lips and heavy chins, and finely modeled, bony hands, as we see them in the Virgin and again in the dead king. In the predella scene the mourning is also muted, reduced to an expressive play of the hands, yet suggesting the intense, hidden emotion of the artist, especially in the somber head of the preacher with his glowing black eyes, which appears behind the light-haired boy at the left (Figs. 16, 17, Part I).

## II

Nothing has been more surprising in the development of the study of Trecento sculpture during the last decades than the rediscovery of wood sculpture by some of the greatest masters, such as Giovanni Pisano, Arnolfo di



Fig. 2. ORCAGNA WORKSHOP (MATTEO DI CIONE?),  
*Angel of the Annunciation (wood)*  
Orvieto, Museo dell'Opera



Fig. 3. FRANCESCO DI NERI SELLAIO,  
*St. John the Evangelist (marble)*  
Florence, Museo Nazionale



Fig. 4. ORCAGNA WORKSHOP,  
St. John (wood)  
S. Michele a Casanuova, near Florence



Fig. 5. ORCAGNA WORKSHOP,  
St. Magdalene (wood)  
S. Michele a Casanuova, near Florence

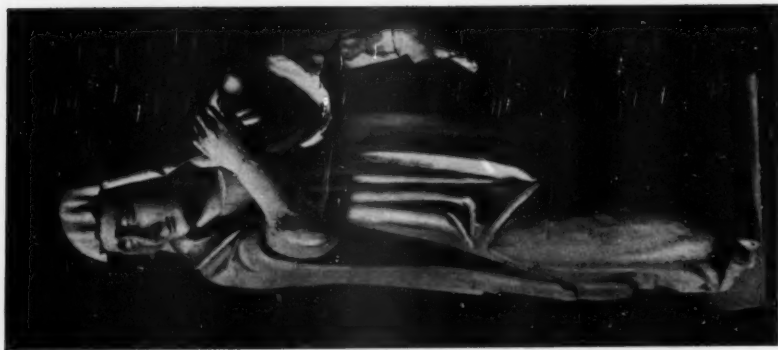


Fig. 6. ORCAGNA WORKSHOP,  
The Virgin (wood)  
S. Michele a Casanuova, near Florence

Cambio, Tino di Camaino and Andrea Pisano. In the period which occupies us here, wood sculpture seems to have come even more into general use due to the difficult times which must have rendered the production of marble monuments too costly, particularly for smaller communities. Tino's Madonna statue, for instance, and the three mourning figures, to which we shall return presently, were found in churches of such country places.

We have seen that Arnolli created outstanding wood sculpture, but we believe that Orcagna should be recognized as the greatest woodcarver of his period in Florence.<sup>6</sup> The creation of wood sculpture for the Christian cult has always been considered the contribution of the Northern countries, most of all Germany. Northern influences, especially in subjects from the Passion, *Pietàs* and crucifixions, in which the German artists excelled, should be expected to have been imported into Italy at a period when political connections between the two countries were still strong. This should be kept in mind when we study the noble and moving *Crucifix* in the Capella della Pura at S. Maria Novella which I should like to attribute to Orcagna, although with hesitation. It is influenced by a type of crucifix of which there is a splendid example in S. Giorgio de Teutonici at Pisa, and which P. Bacci (*Bolletino d'Arte*, Feb., 1924), attributed to a Rhenish master. Here we find similarly elongated forms, knees protruding from the cross (although not as pronounced as in the Florentine *Crucifix*), feet crossed, the arms raised forming a triangle with the cross, and a somewhat similar anatomy of emaciated body. Yet there are essential differences. Head and body are less conventionalized, which points to a rather more advanced period: the outlines of face and body are much softer, less abstract in construction, the metallic curls of the beard are replaced by softer delineation of hair, the hard moustache is missing, the expression of the face is less cruel; on the other hand, the body of the Pisan *Crucifix* has only a few scattered wounds, on the Florentine it is ravaged by terrible eruptions which cover every part of the figure, even under the arms and in the groin. This recalls to us at once the description of the pestilence-stricken in the tales of Villani and Boccaccio. In Gothic crucifixes we are accustomed to Christ's crucified body covered with streams of blood as a result of the Flagellation, but those wounds are streaks caused by slashes of the whip, not round, open boils, as in the Florentine *Crucifix*. This is a strange conception, to which the devoted of the time of the Black Death could not help but react. Christ, by becoming one of the plague-stricken, takes symbolically upon himself the horrible pains Christianity was suffering, and deliberately doing so to free humanity from the

fearful evil. We are reminded of Flaubert's Julian l'Hospitalier, who after many ordeals was required by God to sleep next to a leper, and while embracing him was carried up to heaven.

This *Crucifix* is usually dated at the beginning of the century,<sup>7</sup> an opinion based on the paintings at the ends of the cross which, however, are hardly recognizable. It seems to me difficult to date it as far back as the time of Giovanni Pisano, from whom the strongly pointed position of the knees seems derived. The fact that the Beata Villana<sup>8</sup> is said to have prayed before it frequently and that it was at one time possibly connected with her tomb, does not hold against dating it in Orcagna's period. She died in 1360 and the *Crucifix* is mentioned first in 1365.<sup>9</sup> The head with the high and wide forehead, long, straight nose, high upper lip, half-open mouth, evenly curved from one end to the other, and even the simplified, shell-formed ear, are certainly closely related to Orcagna's types. If the type of wound is connected with the plague, then the *Crucifix* could scarcely have been made before 1340.

With greater certainty we can attribute to Orcagna's workshop three wood sculptures from a *Pietà* group found at S. Michele a Casa Nuova near Florence and first exhibited at the Giottesca of 1937 (Figs. 4-6). The figures representing the Virgin, St. John and St. Magdalene belonged to a group of mourners surrounding the dead Christ after the Deposition from the Cross, a type of composition frequently executed in wood or terracotta in the following centuries. Badly repainted and damaged, the intensity of expression is still clearly indicative of a master and the types with high foreheads, large upper lips, curved and deeply carved mouths are again those of Orcagna. A characteristic feature in the carving of the face should be pointed out: the vertical incisions of the forehead and the triangular groove at the base of the nose, which can be observed on the faces of several of the mourning apostles in Or San Michele where there also occurs a similar sweep of broad diagonal folds of the drapery, especially on the corner figures of the large relief with the death of the Virgin.

Finally we would like to bring a wood sculpture of monumental size into the orbit of Orcagna instead of that of Alberto Arnoldi, to whom it has been attributed: the more than life-size, polychrome statue of St. Michael standing upon the dragon (Fig. 1), which was formerly in a Pisan church, later in the Palazzo Davanzati and finally after a public sale in New York now belongs to an American collection. The originality and severity of the composition indicate to my mind a greater artist than Arnoldi and the greater elongation of the face, framed by wavy hair divided into broad, flowing curls, is more typical





Fig. 7. ORCAGNA, *Marble Relief from Tomb of Donato Acciaiuoli*  
Florence, S. Apostoli



Fig. 8. ORCAGNA, *Marble Relief from Tomb of Donato Acciaiuoli*  
Florence, S. Apostoli



*Fig. 9. ORCAGNA, Annunciation, Relief from Tabernacle  
Florence, Or San Niccolò*



*Fig. 10. ORCAGNA, Angel with Drum  
(marble statuette)  
New York Art Market*

of Orcagna, whose connection with Pisa we have encountered more than once. It is one of the most impressive statues in wood created in the Trecento, worthy of a great follower of the sculptors of the beginning of the century, and executed probably in the forties.

Through these wood sculptures, especially through the three mourning figures, we are led still further back to a marble sarcophagus relief of much earlier date, that of Donato Acciaiuoli, in S. Apostoli, Florence, of 1333 (Figs. 7, 8). The types of the mourning Virgin and St. John are those which we find with little change twenty years later in Orcagna's compositions. Attention should be called not only to the long drawn physiognomies with high upper lips and chins, but especially to the manner in which the separation of the deep eye sockets is marked from the nose by a clear-cut, triangular form and in which the eyeballs are slightly raised and partly hidden by narrow, almond-shaped lids. The large hands occur on all the wood sculptures we described and the wildly curled hair, especially of the male heads, is characteristic throughout of Orcagna's energetic temperament. These elastic curves of the hair have a style of their own in all his works; in the paintings where they appear like waves on Japanese screens and in his sculptures where they have the quality of metal springs, as found in no other works of the period. Only the flow of the drapery differs from Orcagna's later style insofar as it lacks the angularity and precision of the sculptures we have become acquainted with. The continuous, soft curves of the mantles of the two half-length figures, repeated in small parallel rhythmic lines at the ends of the mantles, is most characteristic of the school of Andrea Pisano. Orcagna, at the time when he could have executed the sarcophagus for one of the leading Florentine citizens, was hardly older than twenty-five and perhaps working still in Andrea Pisano's workshop, but disclosing already an originality which points clearly to the master of the Tabernacle of Or San Michele.

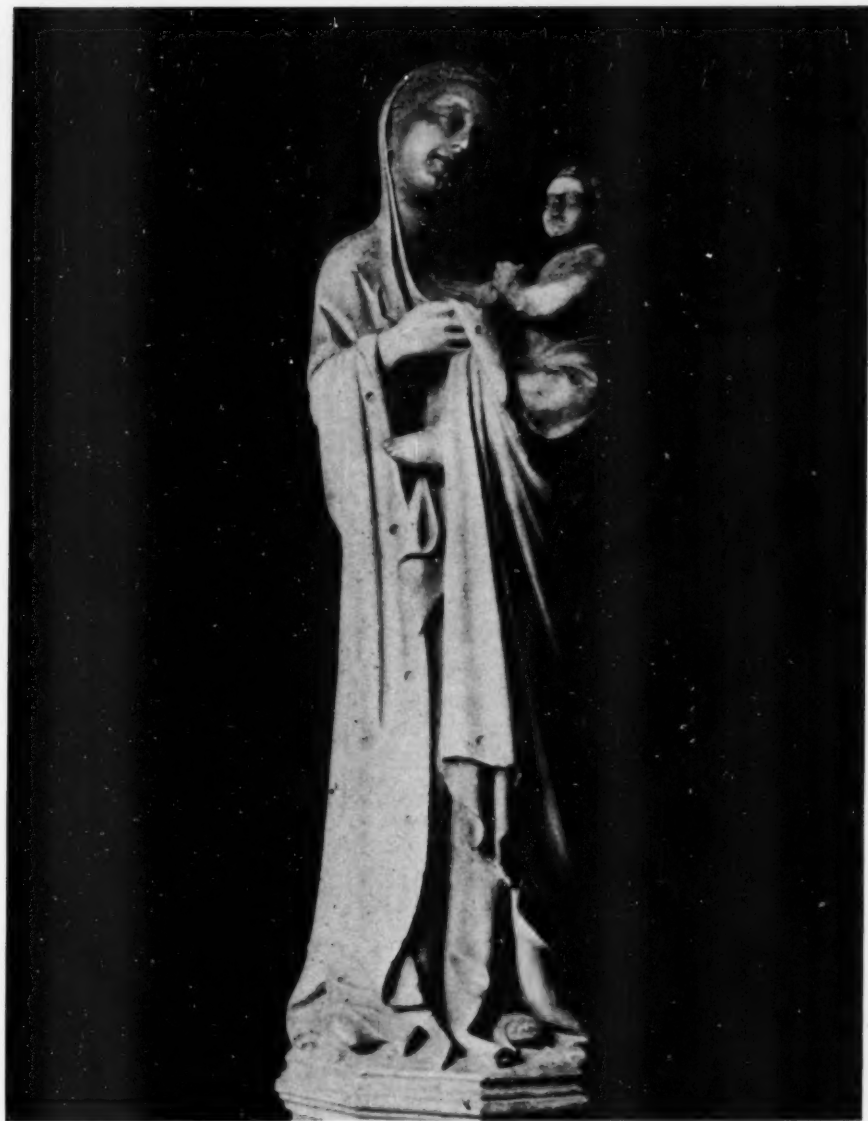
### III

We learn from Vasari that Orcagna occasionally composed sonnets. We may be certain that he was also a friend of music, not only from the fact that at this time poetry and music were closely connected and sonnets were recited to the accompaniment of music, but also from his creations where singing angels with musical instruments abound. None of his contemporaries included so many music-playing angels in their compositions; nowhere do we find so many different instruments represented with so much understanding of their con-

struction. Usually the instrument-playing angels are small in size, their instruments partially hidden and often hardly recognizable. Not so with Orcagna. Not only are all his angels usually making music, singing or playing, but they are large, isolated figures: whose instruments are clearly visible; at times we can even imagine the melody they are playing. On the tabernacle there are several pairs of music-making angels, some singing, some playing cymbals; one pair have in their hands a psalterium, another a viola da gamba, and a fourth, a flute. On each of the three altarpieces: the *Pala Strozzi*, the polyptych in the Uffizi and the one in Budapest (whether or not the latter are only workshop paintings is not essential in this connection), we always encounter in the first plane two large single angels playing instruments most carefully executed in detail; in all three compositions the angel on the left plays upon a hand organ, but this organ is differently constructed in each case, in one instance the one on the right is playing a double flute, in another a violin, in the third, an instrument similar to a bagpipe.

But even more expressive of Orcagna's musical sense is the perfect rhythm of his compositions. It has been said that Orcagna's sculptures in their slow movement and static quality signify a retrogression as compared to Giovanni Pisano's extraordinarily active tempo. It is unjust to compare artists of entirely different temperament. This much is certain: that the explosive nature of the greatest genius of Italian Gothic sculpture prevented his giving that rhythmic and musical quality to his works which is instinctive in every painted and chiseled figure of Orcagna's. The perfect balance in his work, whether large altarpiece or small relief, its architecturally constructed form, create a continuous, solemn rhythm connecting every part to the whole and projecting the feeling of the tones of a sonorous organ in a medieval cathedral.

A fine example of his belief in music as an expression of religious sentiment is preserved to us in a series of music-playing angels, marble statuettes which obviously formed a group around a Madonna figure destined for a small altar (Figs. 10, 12, 13). As the angels came from a private collection at Pisa, they belonged possibly to the impressive marble statuette of the *Madonna* (Fig. 11) of similar size in the Camposanto, recently attributed to Alberto Arnolli but which to my mind is a characteristic work by Orcagna. Although it has the columnar form reminiscent of Alberto—who imitated Orcagna in this respect—the breaking up of the surface through the undercutting of the Madonna's mantle, from which the feet of the Child emerge, is much more interesting than Alberto's usual compositions. The Virgin's face has a strange expression,



*Fig. 11. ORCAGNA, Madonna and Child (marble statuette)  
Pisa, Camposanto*



*Fig. 12. ORCAGNA, Angel with Psalterium  
(marble statuette)  
New York Art Market*



*Fig. 13. ORCAGNA, Angel with Bagpipe  
(marble statuette)  
New York Art Market*



apparently meant as a smile, which was not Orcagna's forte. But the type is his, as is the Child who, without the pleasant aspect of Alberto's children with their pretty, curling hair, is more baby-like and yet at the same time serious, as though prescient of its future. We find precisely the same type in the infant which Christ holds (representing the soul of the Virgin transported to heaven) and in the Christ Child of the *Presentation in the Temple*, both in reliefs of the marble tabernacle. Other external details enforce the authorship of Orcagna: the decoration of the Madonna's mantle with inlaid stones—we know the artist's fame as a mosaicist—and the pedestal with many moldings, similar to those of the statuettes in Or San Michele.

Five of the music-making angels have been preserved, three in the New York art market, two, according to Planiscig in the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna. Thus far they have been attributed to Giovanni Balducci, but they are too advanced and realistic for him; for example, in the precise execution of the bony hands. The types are more characteristic of Orcagna, as a comparison of the profiles of the drummer and the Virgin from the *Annunciation* in Or San Michele (Figs. 9-10) will demonstrate; in the drummer is found again the conchiform ear so frequent in Orcagna's heads. The attributes of the figures and the expressiveness of the faces relative to the instruments played are remarkably well observed: the seriousness of the bagpipe player (Fig. 13) with his blown-up cheeks, pressing his instrument with his left elbow while stopping the holes of his pipe slightly with his fingers; the pleased expression of the drummer; and the elevated one of the angel playing the psalterium, who seems enchanted by his own melody (Fig. 12). It is probably not accidental that the fingers of his hands touch the same chords as do those of the noble young lady playing the same instrument in the charming garden party of Traini's *Triumph of Death*. As we have seen, close ties existed between Pisa and Florence in Orcagna's workshop.

In this Pisan work Orcagna followed the trend of the time in celebrating the Madonna cult, to which, too, the tabernacle in Or San Michele was dedicated. This cult of Mariolatry had been flourishing since the beginning of the fourteenth century, and numerous altarpieces were consecrated to her by the pupils and followers of Giotto. Orcagna's temperament was such that he could not imbue the Virgin and her attendants with the sweetness and light grace of Bernardo Daddi, and later, Fra Angelico. His Madonna is an elderly woman with a life of cruel experience behind her, her visage stern, deep circles beneath her eyes, her pose statuesque; and his angels are of peasant origin, with

large, bony hands and feet, heavy chins and strong noses. But like the Madonna, they are filled with their message and live in a private world which has little connection with ours, as they are transfigured into a character over which death has no power. Such is Orcagna's attitude toward life, based on profundity of feeling scarcely discernible in any of his contemporaries, and significant of a time in which harrowing suffering had brought about a revival of a deeper conception of religiosity in art.

<sup>1</sup> H. Kauffmann, *Jahrbuch der Kgl. Preuss. Kunstsamml.*, 1926, p. 154, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> W. Suida, *Florentinische Maler um die Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, 1905, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> G. Poggi, *Il Duomo di Firenze*, 1909, no. 37; Kauffmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-153.

<sup>4</sup> C. Frey, *Die Loggia dei Lanzi zu Florenz*, 1887, p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> J. von Schlosser in his commentary on Ghiberti; Klara Steinweg in Thieme-Becker, 1932, p. 38, states in her otherwise carefully documented article with questionable certainty: "die Entwürfe zu diesem . . . Werk stammen von Orcagna; die Ausführung blieb vorwiegend Schülern und Gehilfen überlassen." We know nothing of the actual procedure of work in Orcagna's shop, but it is most unlikely that he furnished only the sketches, leaving the execution to his pupils. I am also unable to trace a development from "der flächenhaften Gebundenheit in den früheren Tabernakels-reliefs . . . zu dem räumlich-plastischen Stil der spätern." Orcagna maintained a very consistent relief style throughout and was hardly concerned with the development toward a style of greater plasticity in the round.

<sup>6</sup> As it frequently happens when an artist has been rediscovered, too many works have been attributed to Alberto Arnoldi. Neither the Madonna with two angels above the Porta dei Cornacchini of the cathedral at Florence nor the Madonna statue in S. Francesco a Figline, attributed to Arnoldi by C. L. Ragghianti in his review in *La Critica d'Arte* of the Catalogue of the exhibition of Italian Sculpture in Detroit in 1938, are to my mind by him. The statuette in the Camposanto and the large wood figure of St. Michel from Pisa, which Ragghianti likewise gives to Arnoldi, I have always considered to be works of Orcagna and they are described in the following notes as such.

<sup>7</sup> W. Paatz, *Florentiner Kirchen*, 1937, p. 704; P. Toesca, *Storia dell'Arte Italiana*, 1927, I, pt. 2, 1042.

<sup>8</sup> Villana de' Botti was born in 1305, the daughter of a Florentine patrician, Andrea di Botti. Although much given to worldly pursuits, when her husband, Pietro Popolo, died, she entered the Third Order of St. Dominic and became known for her charity and austere way of life. Her cult was approved by Leo XII in 1824.

<sup>9</sup> For this information I have to thank Dr. W. Paatz.

## PETER RINDISBACHER: FRONTIER REPORTER

By JOHN FRANCIS McDERMOTT

WHEN Peter Rindisbacher died in 1834 he had just begun to find recognition as one of the most promising reporters of the frontier scene. Coming to America from Switzerland at fifteen, he had less than thirteen working years at Red River, Gratiot's Grove, and St. Louis; yet in that time the talented young man produced with remarkable facility a body of work that makes us wish he had had George Catlin's opportunities. Featuring Indian life and buffalo hunting, he was a far better artist than J. C. Lewis or Catlin, his closest contemporaries, in draftsmanship and feeling for subject. Had he lived even to middle age he would have created a pictorial record of first importance.

Some measure of approval and interest he did enjoy in his brief years, both in Canada and in the Mississippi Valley, and after his death two of his pictures were made famous by their use as frontispieces in the folio edition of the McKenney and Hall *Indian Tribes of North America*. Since that time, however, he remained almost entirely forgotten until 1933 when the first of half a dozen scattered articles revived interest in his work.<sup>1</sup> From these and from a new search of contemporaneous sources enough facts have been discovered to piece together something of his life, and pictures enough have been located to fill a one-man show catalogue.

Born in Upper Emmenthal, Canton of Berne, in 1806, Rindisbacher early displayed his talent. Family tradition shows him as a Swiss schoolboy drawing on walls with chalk and charcoal until his father supplied him with drawing materials and colors. Grace Lee Nute has reported that at twelve he was taken by the painter Weibel on a sketching tour in the Alps near Berne. He seems to have had no other instruction. A sketch of the home in Switzerland and a miniature of his sister, Mrs. Monnier, are the only specimens known of his work before he left Europe.

At fifteen the boy set out with his family and other settlers for the Earl of Selkirk's colony on the Red River in Canada. On the sea voyage from Rotterdam to America and on the long water trip to western Canada the boy made a series of forty drawings—at least forty are extant—which are now in the possession of the Public Archives of Canada. The sketches, about six inches by eight,

indicate both the itinerary of the party and the points of special interest to a no doubt excited and eager boy. A few of the drawings are signed "P.R."; all bear titles in German script; a number are in water color.<sup>2</sup>

Margaret Arnett MacLeod has turned up interesting details of young Rindisbacher's career in Canada. The boy entered the colony with some reputation as an artist, and during the five years that the family lived at Red River he was able to contribute frequently to the family purse. It was from Fort Garry that the Rindisbachers drew their food and other supplies and it was there that Peter found a market for his sketches and water colors. Certain Hudson's Bay correspondence now in possession of the Champlain Society shows that George Barnston on November 14, 1824, wrote from York Factory to James Hargrave, accountant at Fort Garry, asking for drawings by the young man. He specified "the Plains Indian on Horseback shooting at an enemy," "the Group of Indians where the Scalp is introduced—Captain Bulger's Palaver" (was this one or two pictures?), "the death of the buffalo," and two or three other buffalo pieces "in which I think the young lad excels," and, in addition, a picture of "traveling in winter with an Indian Guide before the sled."

It is to be noted that Barnston was ordering pictures by title: he spoke of having seen several different copies of each of these and concluded that the artist must have kept one copy himself to reproduce as business might require. At eighteen, then, Rindisbacher was apparently well established in the art business. In the Barnston correspondence there is another interesting passage; he wanted Hargrave to suggest that Peter paint a picture of Assiniboines stealing horses, a subject that no one had yet done, and for it the buyer was ready to go to six pounds, twice his usual price. On a later occasion Barnston wrote that Rindisbacher could put his own price on his work—his conscience was to be trusted—but the whole account was not to exceed fifteen pounds.

Another correspondent of Hargrave interested in Rindisbacher's work was Henry Boulton, who had once been at York Factory but was now in England. To him the Fort Garry accountant wrote in September, 1826, that he had procured from the Swiss boy and sent forward "a quantity of drawings descriptive of Scenes in the Indian Country" for which the artist had been paid six pounds and nineteen shillings. The lot of pictures apparently would have been larger had not calamities fallen on the colony in the spring. As it was, these were the last Boulton could hope to get, wrote Hargrave, for the artist and his entire family had left Red River for the United States. Still another purchaser of Rindisbacher's drawings was William Smith of the Hudson's Bay Com-



*Fig. 1. PETER RINDISBACHER, Bison Attacked by Dog Trains  
West Point, U. S. Military Academy Museum*



*Fig. 2. PETER RINDISBACHER, Bison Attacked by Dog Trains  
Cambridge, Harvard University, Peabody Museum*



*Fig. 3. PETER RINDISBACHER, Inside of an Indian Tent  
Cambridge, Harvard University, Peabody Museum*



*Fig. 4. PETER RINDISBACHER, Isaac Winnesbeek, son of a  
Winnebago Chief  
Madison, Wisconsin Historical Society*



pany, who acknowledged on February 4, 1827, receipt from York Factory of "some of the Swiss Youth's Drawings."

Rindisbacher's water colors also served as originals for the six lithographs published in London about 1825 under the title *Views in Hudson's Bay*. These showed the Governor of Red River in a canoe, driving in a horse cariole, meeting Indians, and so forth. It is amusing to read that the originals had been executed as paintings featuring Captain Andrew Bulger (1822-23) and that his successor Robert Pelly ordered a set of six copies which, once back in England in 1825, he had another artist copy, inserting the Pelly face where the Bulger had been! It was from the latter copies that the lithographs were made.<sup>3</sup>

Without a complete set of photographs for study and comparison, it would be difficult to draw up a definitive catalogue of the work Rindisbacher left behind in Canada, especially when we know that he turned out at least two or three copies of each picture he made. It is possible—but cannot be proved—that some of the forty pictures in the Public Archives of Canada (which Dr. Doughty bought in England) may have been among those that Boulton or other Hudson's Bay people had ordered sent to England. Among the Rindisbachers owned by Barnston were pictures of Norway House, Rockfort, York Factory, and a "Camp on the Shores of Lake Winnipeg."

The late David I. Bushnell Jr. had in his collection of American frontier paintings (now in the Peabody Museum, Harvard) six water colors by Rindisbacher. Writing in 1921, he said that he had bought these in England "some years ago." Four are buffalo hunting pieces, obviously of Canadian scene. One bears the legend "the Dogs discover a herd of Buffaloes and immediately run from the Indians and rouse great confusion" (Fig. 2). It is a winter scene with the dogs dragging the sleds as they rush a buffalo in the foreground. A second picture shows the method of crawling up to buffalo in winter and killing several without disturbing the herd. The third shows Indians on snowshoes hunting with spears.<sup>4</sup> The fourth is a summer hunt with guns. Bushnell had two other water colors of Indian subjects (signed and dated 1824 and 1825); one is an *Inside of an Indian Tent* (Fig. 3); the other is entitled *Indians Returning from War*. Of the former there is an interesting lithograph (entitled *Interior of a Sioux Lodge*) which, for reasons undisclosed, was published in the long unknown tenth part of J. O. Lewis' *Aboriginal Port Folio* (1836). One wonders if the young white man smoking the pipe can be a representation of the artist.

The record of Rindisbacher's Canadian achievement is not complete without notice of the West Point collection of eighteen water colors.<sup>5</sup> In the United States Military Academy Museum catalogue of 1929 these pictures are listed as follows (the titles in quotes are Rindisbacher's own captions):

1. "*Keokeke, a Distinguished Sac Chief*"
2. *Indian Women in Tent*
3. *Scene in an Indian Tent*
4. *Fight between Two Indians, One with Lance, the Other with Bow and Arrow* (Fig. 5)
5. *Indian Taking Scalp*
6. "*Chippewa Mode of Travelling in the Spring and Summer*"
7. "*Chippewa Mode of Travelling in Winter*"
8. "*Trout River Portage in the Hudson's Bay Country*"
9. "*Chippeway Canoe*"
10. *Indian War Dance* (Fig. 6)
11. *Winnebago War Dance*
12. *Indian Chief in War Dress, Mounted*
13. "*The Murder of David Tally [Tully] and Family by the Sissatoons, A Sioux Tribe*"
14. "*Chippeway Scalp Dance*"
15. "*Drunken Frolic amongst the Chippeways and Assiniboinis*"
16. "*The Bison Attacked by the Dog Teams*" (Fig. 1)
17. "*Mode of Chasing the Bison by the Assiniboinis, a Sioux Tribe, on Snow Shoes*"
18. *Indians Hunting the Bison*

The origin of this collection is still a mystery.<sup>6</sup> The pictures have been in the Academy's possession at least since 1898, but no one knows whence they came. All but Nos. 1, 10, 11, and 18 apparently are of Canadian or Minnesotan subjects. But Keokuk and the two war dances (as I shall show presently) were not done before 1829, and No. 18 (the buffalo hunt) almost certainly belongs to a period later than the Canadian. No. 3 in this collection is the same subject as Bushnell's *Indians Returning from War*, and Nos. 16 and 17 seem to be later and more skillfully executed versions—though with less feeling of *on-the-spot*—of the corresponding Bushnell hunting scenes. Examination shows that the copies are never identical: the artist reproduced the subject but varied the detail. Certainly the technical finish of the pictures in the West Point



*Fig. 5. PETER RINDISBACHER, Fight between Two Indians  
West Point, U. S. Military Academy Museum*



*Fig. 6. PETER RINDISBACHER, War Dance of the Sac and Fox  
West Point, U. S. Military Academy Museum*



*Fig. 7. PETER RINDISBACHER, Deer Hunting, Nocturnal and Aquatic  
From the "American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine"*



*Fig. 8. PETER RINDISBACHER, Killing Two Deer with a Bird Gun  
From the "American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine"*

collection—in comparison with other dated work—suggests that they were all made about the same time and at a comparatively late period of the artist's brief career. From the subjects it is sure that this set was painted not earlier than the summer of 1829. The probability then is that these copies were made in St. Louis.

Having been flooded out in 1826, the Rindisbacher and other Swiss families moved south into the United States. It seems almost certain that before the close of this year Peter was settled down in the Wisconsin lead region. Adèle Gratiot later recalled that in that year her husband J. P. B. Gratiot and his brother Henry "secured the services of several [Swiss] families, among whom was Peter Rindisbacher, afterwards so celebrated for his pictures of Indians and other works of art."<sup>7</sup>

There the young man lived for three years. No doubt he was sketching and painting as usual, but it is not until 1829 that we find further specific mention of his work. In midsummer of that year Caleb Atwater, on his way to Prairie du Chien as one of the commissioners to make treaties with the Winnebago and other Indians, met the young artist. Not long after this excursion Atwater, writing up his travels, said that he had brought back with him "as correct likeness as I ever saw drawn" of Keokuk, Morgan, Tiama, Quasquawma, Tom (a half-blood), an "improvisatori, whose name has escaped my recollection," and several other principals of the Sac and Fox tribe. "Gratitude towards them" for their helpful behavior at Prairie du Chien, he explained, was his "motive for being at the expense of these beautiful paintings." He added that the pictures had gone to London "a year since" (1830?) but did not give the name of his artist. Later in the narrative Atwater mentioned a likeness of Isaac Winnesheek (Fig. 4), son of a chief at Prairie Lacrosse.<sup>8</sup>

Further information about Rindisbacher's work for Atwater is found in two letters from Atwater now in the Wisconsin Historical Society. He wrote to Lyman C. Draper on July 24, 1854, inclosing "4 drawings of my favorites, natives of your region." Two of these were tinted sketches of a prairie wolf and of a water fowl; a third is the miniature of Isaac Winnesheek; the fourth has not been located.<sup>9</sup> The writer mentioned also that he had paid his painter one hundred and thirty dollars for his services. The second letter, dated August 13, 1854, gives some specific detail about the likenesses of Keokuk and others and establishes this piece of work as the original water color for the Sac and Fox war dance published by McKenney and Hall in *The Indian Tribes of North America*.

The likenesses of 13 Indians, Sauks & Foxes, in water colours, were given to Col Childs of Philada who promised me to engrave the Picture & send me 25 copies of the print. It represented 13 of the Sauks & Foxes, in a war dance. Keokuk Morgan & others were drawn to the life, by my Swiss artist, Rindesberger. Col. Childs carried the picture to England, where he published it, accompanied by a biographical sketch of each Indian written by me. On the Colonel's return, he sent only one copy which fell into the hands of James Hall of Cincinnati, who in co. with some engraver in Philada published it in the nos. of a magazine. The original picture and the engravings are in London and not in America.<sup>10</sup>

A new phase of Rindisbacher's life opened in the fall of 1829: the first of a series of contributions appeared in *The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*. One of his friends took enough interest in his drawings to send East his picture of a *Sioux Warrior Charging*, which was published in the October number of that new periodical, accompanying an article on "Horsemanship of the North American Indians." Rindisbacher, named as the artist, was thought to have "been very happy in this effort; and nothing like exaggeration can be detected in the most critical examination of the piece." Possibly the unidentified patron was the correspondent who, on September 17, wrote from Washington to the editor of the *Turf Register* (the extract of his letter was reprinted in the *St. Louis Beacon* on December 12, 1829) that, excellent as the lithograph was,

the original possesses greater claims to our admiration. It is a painting of nearly twice the size of the copy in the magazine; was taken from nature; and is remarkable for its spirit and the neatness of its execution. The artist . . . is a young man [who] has lived since early youth in our *Western Wilds*. He is perfectly acquainted with the subject of his very successful effort; and has, the writer of this is informed, in his portfolio, views of many of the finest scenes in that part of our country whose *untamed wilderness* has never before furnished subjects for the pencil or the burin. He has, however, more—a genius as fruitful, and an imagination as vivid as the scenes amongst which he has dwelt. These will enable him, in cultivating his fine talents, to throw aside the threadbare subjects of the schools, and give to the world themes as fresh as the soil upon which he was bred;—glowing as the newness of nature; and picturesque as a combination of bold scenery, with bolder man and manners, will afford. I trust he will ere long be amongst us; when an enlightened public will not hesitate properly to appreciate him.<sup>11</sup>

Where this writer meant by "amongst us" is not clear. Peter Rindisbacher's move was to St. Louis. That he was settled in the western city by December, 1829, is established by a letter signed "R.," dated "St. Louis, Dec. 7," and published in the *St. Louis Beacon* on the twelfth of that month. This friendly puff reads:

Messrs. Keemle & Brooks—

*Gentlemen*—I have this morning amused myself in the examination of Mr. Rindisbacher's port-folio. I am afraid it is not generally known that this artist now resides in this city, engaged in sketching from nature, taking miniature portraits, and copying occasionally from engravings.



Mr. Rindisbacher has marked out a new track, and almost invented a new style, of painting—one, too, of much interest. His sketches of groups or single Indians, are deserving of the highest admiration. The proportions and development of muscle, in his delineations of the human figure, are extremely correct. There is a living and moving effect in the swell and contraction he gives to the muscular appearance of his figures, that evinces much observation, judgment and skill. Talent, I might almost say genius, like his, deserves encouragement, and, undoubtedly, were he in a place of more fashion and leisure, he would receive it.

Those who have not yet examined his fine paintings of Indian dances, lodges, &c. will be well paid for their trouble by calling at his rooms and viewing a style of painting so new and novel.

On April 6, 1830, one of his military friends wrote at length from Jefferson Barracks to the editor of the *American Turf Register* (unfortunately for us the letter was published without signature in the July number). He began by saying that "Mr. H. [Holmes?] informs me that you are alive to the merits and promise of Mr. Rindisbacher" and he now took the "pleasure to introduce him more particularly . . . by a pen drawing of a buffalo attacked by a band of prairie wolves published in the same number. His familiarity with these subjects, the accuracy of their delineation, their freshness and novelty, give to him and his works an interest which few others can challenge. The generous anticipation of the Washington writer, that 'an enlightened public will not hesitate properly to appreciate him,' we feel assured will most abundantly be realized." After some further general comment about this "young artist, self-taught, and without advantages," he proceeded to a discussion of the young man's portfolio which is especially interesting, for at this time he had with him either originals or copies of a number of pictures done in Canada or on the Upper Mississippi:

His port folio contains many fine efforts. The Indian dance is without fault; and, of itself, sufficient to establish a reputation. The buffalo chase is pronounced true to nature, by all who can estimate its merits. He is very happy in his landscapes; and, when time and opportunities shall permit him to spread the magnificent west before the admirers of the grand and picturesque, his sketches from Hudson's Bay at St. Louis, will, I have no doubt, secure him a lasting reputation.

The scene represented in the drawing [enclosed] is frequently witnessed. The report of a gun in the buffalo plains attracts numbers of gaunt and half famished wolves to the spot. Should a buffalo be slightly, or rather, not mortally wounded, and escape from the hunters, he is beset by these, his constant foes, who, not unfrequently, worry him to death.

. . . The dog-train, of which Mr. R. has given a spirited sketch, is much used in the buffalo country in winter. To see the dog harnessed, and applying his strength to such a vehicle, is not a little amusing.

The train is made of an oak plank, half an inch in thickness, 1½ feet wide, and from 9 to 12 feet in length, turned up in front. They will travel twenty miles with a loaded, or forty with an unladen train. The greater facilities for subsisting the dog, at this season, give him a preference over the horse. They are fed at night only, and are allowed a quarter of Buffalo meat; are obedient under all circumstances but one: Should their repast the night previous have been less liberal than usual, and that great delicacy, a buffalo, cross their path, it is impossible to restrain them; like the wolf, which, in appearance too, they resemble, this penchant is indulged.



In utter disregard of the proprieties of the situation, and the resistance of the driver, away they dash, and succeed, generally, in killing the animal, with the cooperation of the master, who is no indifferent spectator of the struggle; for, now and then, the buffalo tosses a dog upon his horns, and, entangling his enemies in their harness, bears them off, with the blankets, provisions, and other indispensables, of the now destitute voyageur. . . .

The writer next described various Indian styles of buffalo hunting; possibly his paragraphs were inspired by pictures in Rindisbacher's studio. One subject we know had been painted before this time:

The chase of the buffalo, on snow-shoes, is a favourite amusement with the Indian. A number of the young men, provided with these shoes, which enable them to move on the surface, sally out, and endeavour, assisted by their dogs, to drive the buffalo towards some deep ravine, or hollow, into which the snow has drifted; this effected they become an easy prey, and are dispatched by arrows, spears and knives. The effort to keep up with the animal, and to outrun each other, gives the zest to the chase; while the squaws and children, when it takes place near the lodge, exhibit their skill and belligerent propensities in the finale.

This hunt on snowshoes and the dog-train picture, which are both represented in the Bushnell Collection, are also in West Point. The Indian dance mentioned, I think, would be either the *Sac and Fox War Dance* or the *Winnebago War Dance*; and the buffalo chase referred to in the same paragraph is almost undoubtedly the subject that McKenney and Hall used.

Rindisbacher's third contribution to the *American Turf Register* (February, 1832) was a picture of *Deer Hunting, Nocturnal and Aquatic* (Fig. 7) as engraved on steel by Hatch and Smillie. To explain this subject from the "inimitable pencil" of Rindisbacher, Wap-o-pe-kah, a correspondent of the journal, wrote an interesting letter from the region of Prairie du Chien, but the reproduction of this scene makes any quotation unnecessary.

In the August, 1832, issue was published a sketch of the *Grouse of the Western and North Western Prairies* (lithographed by Childs and Inman). A footnote to the accompanying article added that the editor had received from Rindisbacher a drawing of the grouse of the southern region which was to be engraved by Lawson and published soon.

A more interesting subject to most people was the *Indians Gathering Wild Rice and Shooting Wild Fowl* which appeared in the October, 1832, number. A letter signed "R." and dated March, 1832, discussed the subject of Rindisbacher's picture at length. "The drawing sent you by Mr. Rindisbacher, illustrating the method adopted by Indians to obtain the means of subsistence (for it does not refer alone to shooting), is applicable to all the Indians from the Lakes to the Mississippi." The writer then described at length the way in which

a family of Indians would go birdshooting, fishing, and gathering rice in the same canoe. The drawing, however, pictured only the shooting (Fig. 9).

The next Rindisbacher picture, in the December issue, shows a Prairie wolf "taken in the trap of the western hunter, who is represented in the plate, with his destroying club, approaching in the distance." (There is no connection between this sketch and Atwater's prairie wolf drawing.) This sketch, we are told, was "presented to the readers of this magazine, by Captain Mason and Lieutenant Holmes, of the army." It was "another example of the fine tact of Mr. Rindisbacher, and with various others in store, will afford to American, and more especially to European, readers, entertaining specimens of the game, and the modes of taking it, now almost peculiar to the western regions of America."

Nothing further of Rindisbacher's was published in the *American Turf Register* until June, 1833. In January of this year the readers had been promised "a beautiful drawing by Rindisbacher, representing Capt. Mason of the army, in the act of shooting, *with one hand*, from on horseback, two deer crossing the Prairie—holding the reins in *one hand*, whilst he fired both barrels with the other—his horse being, as he supposed, not practised to stand fire" (Fig. 8). When the scene finally appeared in June it was accompanied by an article on "Bouncing Deer" in the American Bottom," written by our friend "R." and dated March, 1832.

August, 1833, saw publication at last of Rindisbacher's picture of *Wilson's Pinnated Grouse* (Fig. 10), promised so many months earlier. Once again we are reminded of the close connection between the artist and his army friends: "For the drawing we are indebted, as for other valuable contributions, to Major Mason and Lieut. Holmes . . . at whose instance Mr. Rindisbacher had the kindness to make a sketch for the American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine."

Two months later we find a woodcut of a "Wild Turkey Trap" which the editors had "selected from the inimitable drawings of our friend Rindisbacher." In December appeared a companion piece to the Mason picture. This one celebrated another hunting incident of March, 1832, in the American Bottom opposite St. Louis, according to a letter signed "B." The writer was witness, "with other gentlemen of St. Louis," to a particularly exciting exploit in which Reuben Holmes had shot a deer at full speed. Between that time and publication, poor Holmes had been promoted and died.<sup>12</sup>

With one exception this marks the last of Rindisbacher's contributions to

the *American Turf Register* and the importance of his army friends becomes obvious. Holmes was dead; Mason had transferred to the newly organized First Dragoons early in March, 1833, and left Jefferson Barracks for Fort Gibson in November. Through some chance a drawing of an American Hunter's Camp found its way into the hands of Theodore B. Skinner, son of a former editor of the magazine, and he passed it on for publication in the October, 1840, number.

Although there are few examples extant of other work, Rindisbacher in these St. Louis years did much more than sports subjects. An advertisement in the *St. Louis Times*, April 30, 1831, announced his services (not, I think, for the first time) as a miniature painter. In his work room on Locust Street between Main and Second he was prepared to execute "MINIATURE AND LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS, &c. on the most reasonable terms." He held out the customary threat of all professional artists: "His stay in this place is limited to the ensuing fall."

How many or what St. Louisans sat to him is unknown. He is said to have done on ivory a miniature of Wilson Primm at the age of eighteen (i.e., 1828), but this is known only from a copy of it made by Emile Herzinger in St. Louis thirty or thirty-five years later. Another specimen of his work was "a miniature copy of Lady Ruthven," which was exhibited in the Mechanics Fair at St. Louis in November, 1842.

Our last glimpse of Rindisbacher comes from Charles Fenno Hoffman, who visited St. Louis in March, 1834. Fascinated by the Indians and the wild life of the West, the New Yorker struck up an acquaintance with the artist. At this time he wrote:

The appearance of some of these tribes, when on a war-party, must be singularly martial and picturesque. Their shirt of buff, gaily beaded with wampum; the scarlet leggins, fringed with porcupine-quills; the highly ornamented shooting pouch, and rattling collar of polished bears' claws, with the gay sash and rich buffalo-robe; and above all, the chivalric scalplock, tufted with feathers—must make no contemptible appearance as they flaunt over the green prairie, and attract the eye to the horsemanship of many a well-mounted rider. They would take the eye of a painter; and have, in fact, suggested some most spirited sketches to Rindisbacher, a highly original artist at St. Louis, at whose rooms I have spent more than one agreeable hour.

Five months later Rindisbacher was dead. The *Missouri Republican* on August 15, 1834, regretfully announced that he had died two days earlier. "Mr. Rindisbacher had talents which gave every assurance of future celebrity. He was generally known for his graphic sketches of Indian life; some of which, engraved for the *Sporting Magazine*, have excited much attention . . . he

possessed a keen sensibility and the most delicate perception of the beautiful." On the fourteenth he had been buried with military honors by the St. Louis Grays, to which he belonged.

A few more pieces of his work remain to be mentioned here, for uncertainty of date makes it difficult to place them in a chronological outline. William Preston Clark of St. Louis at the time of his death in 1840 owned "4 colorings by Rindisbacher," but the probate records do not further describe them or make clear their disposal. The Audubon Museum at Henderson, Kentucky, has an original pencil sketch about four inches by seven of a fox and a tinted sketch three inches by four of a grasshopper, both signed.

McKenney and Hall used a *Buffalo Hunt* by Rindisbacher as frontispiece to their second volume. There is no explanation by the authors how they obtained this picture and certainly this one cannot have come from Caleb Atwater. There are at least three versions of this subject: the lithograph in *The Indian Tribes of North America*, the water color in the USMA Collection, and a larger water color now owned by Ernest R. Reiff of St. Paul. Miss Nute reports (*Minnesota History*, June, 1942) that the Reiff picture was given by the artist to Benjamin West Tingley while on a visit to St. Louis and remained in his family until Mr. Reiff bought it from a great-granddaughter. The scene in the three pictures is essentially the same, but all differ so much in details that neither of the paintings could have served as original for the litho. This justifies the assumption that there must be at least one more such painting in existence.

So Peter Rindisbacher in thirteen short years painted more pictures than we are able to count today. Undoubtedly there were many more subjects than appear in this list and certainly there are two or three water colors for every subject. Those Indian portraits and paintings of Indian customs, as well as the sporting pictures, make us hope that many others can be found and that some museum interested in frontier art will put on a Rindisbacher show which will adequately demonstrate his special and peculiar talent as a reporter of the frontier.

<sup>1</sup> Most credit goes to Grace Lee Nute for her articles in *Minnesota History*: "Peter Rindisbacher," XIV, 283-287; "Rindisbacher's Minnesota Water Colors," XX, 54-57; "A Rindisbacher Water Color," XXIII, 154-156; and "New Discoveries" in *The Beaver*, December, 1945, p. 34. Alice E. Smith contributed a note on the painter in Wisconsin in *Minnesota History*, XX, 173-175. Margaret Arnett MacLeod's valuable article on his work at Red River appeared in *The Beaver*, December, 1945 (pp. 30-33); to the same issue (pp. 34-36) Clifford Wilson contributed an account of "Pelly's Picture Books."

<sup>2</sup> The water color sketch showing the arrival of the colonists at Red River on November 1, 1821, was reproduced in *Minnesota History*, XIV, 287; other pictures in this group have been published in *The Beaver*, September, 1940 (pp. 6, 7) and December, 1945 (p. 30).

<sup>2</sup> A comparison of these lithos with some of the Rindisbacher sketches led Clifford Wilson (*The Beaver*, December, 1945, pp. 34-36) to conclude that the water color in the McCord Museum supposed to represent Captain Bulger leaving the fort at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, on May 22, 1815, and the oil of the same subject owned by W. A. Bulger are both almost certainly Rindisbacher's work.

<sup>3</sup> Published by Bushnell in *Bulletin* 77 of the Bureau of American Ethnology. The Peabody Museum kindly furnished me with photocopies of the six Bushnell collection paintings and the Indiana Historical Society with a photo of the lithograph in the *Aboriginal Port Folio*.

<sup>4</sup> I am particularly grateful to the United States Military Academy Museum and Lloyd Kirtland, its curator, for a set of photos of the collection there.

<sup>5</sup> Miss Nute suggested that the collection might have originally been acquired by some army officer at Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chien) from the artist himself in 1829. Two of the officers on duty there played a considerable part in Rindisbacher's life at St. Louis: Richard B. Mason and Reuben Holmes, both sportsmen, were active in securing publication of his work in the *American Turf Register*. It cannot be proved that either of them ever owned the USMA pictures.

<sup>6</sup> *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, X, 267.

<sup>7</sup> *Writings* (Columbus, 1833), 247-248, 287. The first edition of the narrative was published in 1831.

<sup>8</sup> The fourth was possibly the sketch mentioned in a letter dated Washington, June 1, 1831, published in the *New York Observer*, August 27, 1831: "I have a beautiful drawing of a [muskrat] taken in that country by an artist residing at Gratiot's Grove." For photos of the drawings it owns I am obliged to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

<sup>9</sup> Alice E. Smith, "Peter Rindisbacher: a Communication," *Minnesota History*, XX, 173-175. The inclusion of Atwater's notes on the plate in McKenney and Hall indicate that it was made not from Rindisbacher's painting but from the English engraving. The fate of the original is unknown. When C. A. Murray (*Travels in North America*, London, 1839) used this picture as a frontispiece, he made acknowledgment to *The Indian Tribes of North America*. The water color of this subject in the West Point collection is essentially like that in McKenney and Hall: thirteen dancers and four seated musicians. A third version of this picture, according to Tuckerman (*Book of the Artists*, 632), was in 1867 owned by James C. McGuire of Washington; in the sale catalogue of the McGuire collection (1888) it was listed as an Indian War Dance (seventeen portraits) fifteen by eight inches. Miss Mary McGuire of New York informs me that the picture is not now in possession of her family.

<sup>10</sup> Miss Smith suggested Atwater for this friend, but he did not arrive in the East until after this October number was in print. Those most active in Rindisbacher's behalf during the next few years were Captain Mason and Lieutenant Holmes; the nature of this periodical, as well as the mention of their names with his in later issues, would seem to confirm my conjecture as to these anonymous friends. It is possible that the "R" who wrote the letter next quoted could be Reuben Holmes.

<sup>11</sup> The probate record of his estate did not list any Rindisbacher work in his possession.

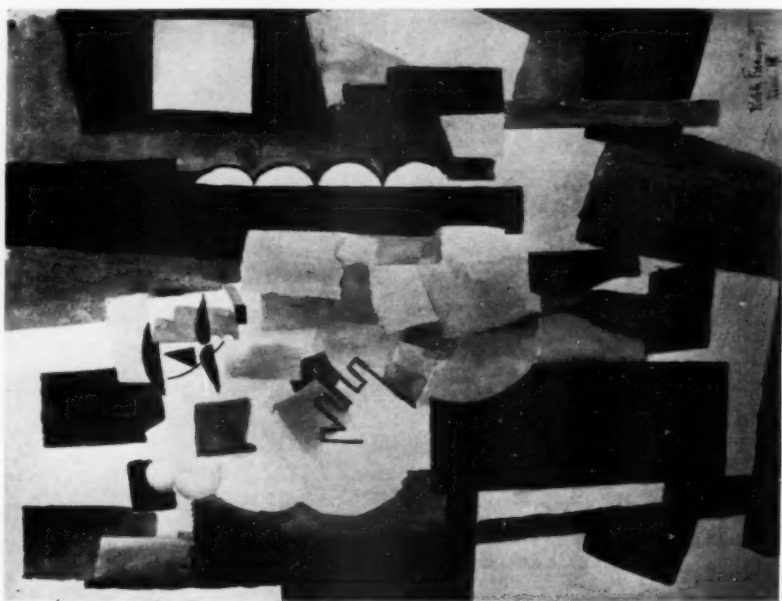


Fig. 9. PETER RINDISBACHER, *Indian Shooting Wild Fowl*  
Philadelphia, Academy of Natural Sciences

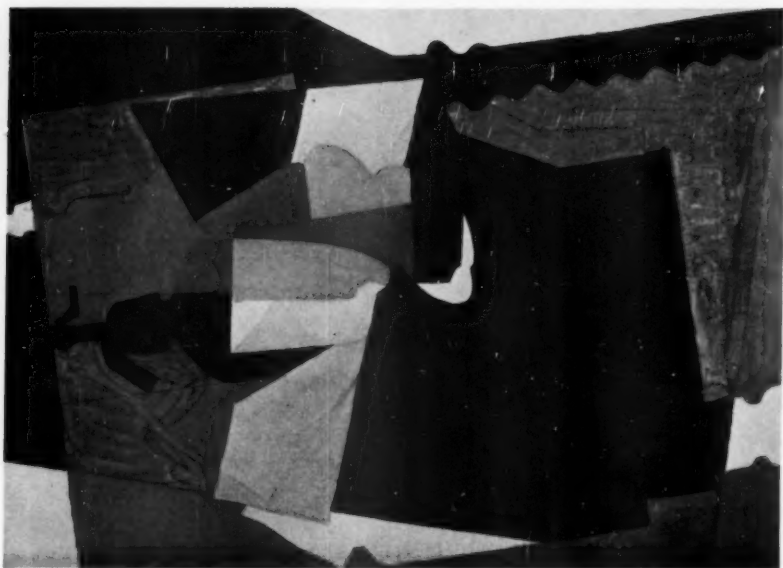


Fig. 10. PETER RINDISBACHER, *Wilson's Pinnated Grouse*  
Philadelphia, Academy of Natural Sciences





*Fig. 1. ROGER DE LA FRESNAYE, L'Officier  
New York, Private Collection*



*Fig. 2. JUAN GRIS, Syphon and Glass  
New York, Private Collection*



## OF THE PROXIMITY OF DEATH AND ITS STYLISTIC ACTIVATIONS — ROGER DE LA FRESNAYE AND JUAN GRIS

*By* ETHLYNE J. *and* GERMAIN SELIGMAN

**D**OES the proximity of death accelerate latent artistic evolution or does it promote an entirely new style? There could but be a vast difference between the outlook of an artist who knows in the prime of life that his days are numbered and one who is still healthy in body and soul and has reason to expect only the normal attrition of the years. This article is not the place for lengthy theories but is intended as a human problem, based on a sympathetic approach to the stylistic changes which are suddenly presented by the work of Roger de la Fresnaye and Juan Gris. For almost overnight in 1920 such a change did occur in the work of each, and this date is not an accidental one; to Juan Gris that year brought the first illness which forced him to go south; to La Fresnaye, who had been badly gassed in 1917, it brought further confirmation of how desperate his condition was when, as a result, complications set in.

There is a further community of dates linking these two artists and their fates; they died within two years of each other after long illnesses—La Fresnaye in 1925 and Juan Gris in 1927, each at the age of forty. Otherwise, however, they were fundamentally different, not only in their esthetic pursuits and achievements but in their innermost make-up. Thus when death set the time at which it would claim them ineluctably, their reactions were just as wide apart. However, if the signs they used did not belong to the same alphabet, the sure knowledge of the imminent end caused reactions in each which no sympathetic eye can fail to see.

Both painters and truly great artists, it is in their chosen sphere that their desperation is revealed. There is nothing surprising in this; graphologists have shown how much of physical distress is revealed in handwriting, and indications could no doubt be found in that of these two men, but it is curious how little stress has been laid on similar revelations in artistic production, particularly today when there is a tendency to greater interest in psychological and analytical approaches than in purely emotional, esthetic reactions. An explanation may perhaps be found in the fact that examples of such unexpectedly curtailed careers are fortunately rare, for we know of few cases of artists who, in the full maturity of their talents, were told they had only so many more

years or months to live and who went on painting with this certainty gnawing at their vitals. The trembling hand of one who has grown too old, the loss of sight of others, all fall within the scope of the normal rules. Even Seurat, who died at the age of thirty-two, was sick only a few days and had no warning to reflect itself in his work. Thus the exceptional characters and, to a certain extent, the similar fates of La Fresnaye and Gris escaped the attention of the art historian.

The drama of La Fresnaye and Gris would be, too, of limited interest were it not for the incidences on their creations in terms of the personalities involved. If we analyze the works of art created by these two men during these last few years and examine them objectively, how much of the tragedy their work still displays and yet how different are their agonizing voices! If at times they still have the vigor of a clarion in the early morning, more often they sound the melancholy notes of evening. How did each react before this edict of death? Great crises show the true metal of a man, good or bad, and the real fibers of his being; born far apart, death did not bring them closer together.

It is the quality of genius to grasp quickly what is within its field and the tempo of La Fresnaye's esthetic evolution was unusually speedy, even in the four years preceding the war, 1910 to 1914, and it accelerates in the war years to 1918. By 1910<sup>1</sup> he had completed the charming early series of Brittany landscapes, the already much advanced Meulan group, and had started on his famous four great paintings: *The Artillery*, the *Vie Conjugale*, the *Conquête de l'Air* and the *Quatorze Juillet*. This last closed the cycle practically on the day of the declaration of war in August, 1914. It had taken him four years, one per year, with each painting showing new accomplishments over the previous, a new technique, a new approach. These were often preceded by small complete versions as superb as the final large ones, and in addition he painted such sumptuous still-lives as the *Mappemonde*. Thus these years represent giant steps. In our day only Seurat has achieved such a performance.

When war came, La Fresnaye, like every other Frenchman, donned a uniform and almost immediately one can notice the breaking down of his Olympian aloofness. The interest he shows in his fellow men dates from this period, for heretofore in his work he had given little importance to human beings. They figure merely as so many decorative motives without individuality—actors on an antique bas-relief, measured in movement and quasi two-dimensional in their lack of realism. This sort of middle period, then, is of particular interest, for it constitutes the basis for the final act played over the short period of those

few years when the torture of physical pain and the daily presence of death at his side brought a driving frenzy to these last breathing moments. For this great man knew he was condemned. Too many others were dying in hospitals all over the country as a direct or indirect result of the hellish gases for which no remedy had been found. If in some cases, La Fresnaye was one, the progress of the malady was arrested for a short while, it started anew with a fresh spurt of agonizing moral and physical pain. Thus to a man so wise and understanding there was neither purpose nor time for lies with which to hide the desperate truth. Having already conveyed so much to the world, La Fresnaye realized then how much more his message should include, and in these few years one sees an almost complete reversal of his esthetic attitude and conception, a reversal which is at once, paradoxically, the indispensable complement to the work already done.

An artist who does not evolve is not worthy of the name and his evolution is a function of an increasingly great understanding not only of technical problems but, more important, of human development. La Fresnaye's whole life as an artist, slightly over ten years, was a series of strivings, crowned by the achievement of one goal after another. He who for so long had been something of an introvert, aloof from the outside world, was thrown by the war into contact with the problems, sufferings and hopes of his fellow men. In them his highly sharpened sensitiveness found the source of new inspiration. It is then that we see so vividly the breaking down of reserve, eloquently expressed by the curved lines which slowly but definitely replace the angular. There is frustration and longing in the sensuous arabesques outstretched to caress and enfold, but however revealing the symbolical lines may be of inner conflict, they never lose the inherent dignity and refinement which remain La Fresnaye's attributes to the last.

Due to the character of his illness, he was forced to work mostly from his bed or stretched on a couch, hence there are few paintings after 1920 and they are all of small size, but drawing, water color and gouache offered him the facility of imparting with a few sure strokes the subject of his inspiration and, fortunately, there is a comparatively rich group from these last moments.

The three dated drawings reproduced here contain the gamut of his evolution and show within the space of roughly ten years greatly different conceptions, indicated not only by the choice of subject but even more by the virtuosity of his graphism. The study for *The Bathers* (Fig. 3) belongs to the monumental period of 1910-14 and shows the importance given to composition, but

in a handwriting typical of the Cubist period with a preponderance of geometrical figures and the angularity they perforce imply. The water color *L'Officier* (Fig. 1) belongs to the war years and if it is still very stylized, it employs already some of the volutes and spirals which will constitute his alphabet in the last phase. Interesting, too, is the increasing prominence he gives to the motives of hovering spheres already seen in the 1910-14 period, but most important is the intimacy and complete lack of formalism of the subject itself.

The series of portraits belongs to these last years,<sup>2</sup> but more striking is the attention he now gives to the nude.<sup>3</sup> *Jeune Garçon* (Fig. 4) is one of the climactic achievements of the artist and, alas, a harbinger of the last act. There is no longer any pretense to formalism or to any sort of setting. True, of course, this is a study sheet for the sole enjoyment of the painter who never thought it would leave his studio, but it nevertheless contains within it the complete expression of his last period. Where the human body had never heretofore played a major role, he now appears to revel in the imaginary caresses of his feverish and exacerbated mind. It is as though at last a new world had revealed itself, one of sensuous temptations which no words can express as well as does the up-raised hand of the youth. Every small, supple undulation of line is strained to lay bare the thousands of antennas of feeling, and the hand we instinctively know has but one haunting desire—to contact flesh. Though strongly built, it has no interest in any action implying weight or force, its sole purpose at that climactic moment is a caress.

Two men could hardly be more dissimilar than Roger de la Fresnaye and Juan Gris; thus faced with approaching death, their language could have little in common. The final agony of Gris was a short one, we may assume, for if the first attack of disease in 1920 came certainly as a shock to him and he was suddenly made to realize that his robust constitution and youth were no protection against its inroads, the published letters covering this period do not actually reflect such thoughts. It is obvious, however, that the length of time needed for recovery must have perturbed him, for a man will accept with greater equanimity the acute period of unexpected disease than he will a long drawn out convalescence which an undermined physique requires. The first, he will argue, may happen to anyone at any time, just a bad stroke of fate, but inability to effect a speedy comeback will weigh on his mind in view of the implicit conclusion that more is at stake than recovery from a single illness. Whether this reasoning applies to Juan Gris it is impossible to tell because such admissions are not easily made, even to one's closest friends and, *a fortiori*,

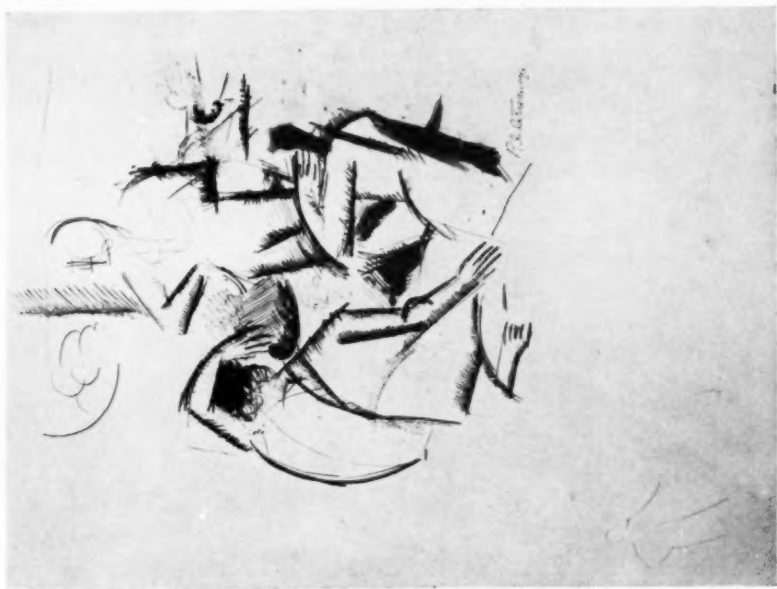


Fig. 3. ROGER DE LA FRESNAYE, *Study for "The Barber"*  
New York, Private Collection

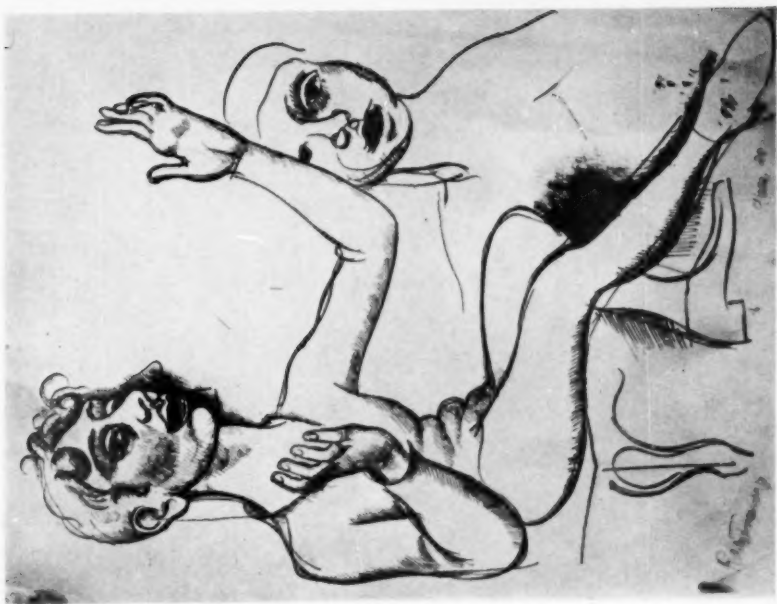


Fig. 4. ROGER DE LA FRESNAYE, *Jenne Garçon*  
New York, Private Collection



*Fig. 5. JUAN GRIS, Guitar and Fruitbowl  
New York Art Market*



*Fig. 6. JUAN GRIS, Le Canigon  
Buffalo, Albright Art Gallery*



not in writing to people on whom one is dependent for livelihood, close as they may be in friendly interest.

Thus it is in objective observation of the work of the artist that we must search for the clue, not in his correspondence or from people who surrounded him and whose judgments are understandably biased. Presented in this fashion, devoid of other considerations, does the *œuvre* of Gris present a change of style and, if so, can a date be set to it which coincides with any particular occurrence in his life? Further, is such stylistic difference a temporary one or did it continue, shaping itself increasingly in accordance with a new credo?

That there is a change is not a matter of controversy. The artist himself presages it when he writes in 1920, after his first illness: "I think it will be impossible to take up work again exactly where I left off more than three months ago."<sup>4</sup> Whether one considers this date as the end of the great period of Juan Gris is not under discussion. Neither is it the point, as has been argued, that a better understanding of the evolution of Cubism leads to a greater appreciation of Gris' later work. The question is, rather, what does Gris represent in our minds and what emotional reaction does a direct visual observation of his work transmit to our sensorial centers? Do we admire him for the robust, uncompromising, towering forces, the quasi-brutality of the colors and their daring juxtaposition, for the sharpness of the edges and the architectural strength of the backgrounds? Or is it for the softer line of later work when the construction, once so straight and erect, has sagged sidewise for lack of support and subdued colors have appeared in opposition to the virile character of his earlier work?

A glance at the three paintings reproduced here illustrates the point. The first, *Syphon and Glass*, is of 1917, the second, *Guitar and Fruitbowl* and the third, *Le Canigon*, are of 1921. It is unfortunate that they must be shown in black and white, for their colors show perhaps even more than their graphism the complete dissociation of one period from the other. Where in *Syphon and Glass* (Fig. 2) there are strong oppositions of high-pitched hues, underlined or separated by pure whites, in *Guitar and Fruitbowl* (Fig. 5)<sup>5</sup> the colors are of subdued intensities centering around raw sienna, ochre and pale olive-green; the blacks have no longer the same intensity, nor is the white as dazzling.

Even in black and white, however, what oppositions are presented by the compositional elements of the two! The one is erect and angular with few curves, and these carried out with compass-like precision, and the objects are held solidly within an overall geometrical figure which narrows toward the



top to emphasize the effect of tightly assembled items weighted at the base so that they cannot move. There is no concession toward an unexpected slipping or sliding. The *Guitar and Fruitbowl* is a perfect antithesis. The partial framing at the top fails to hold the curves of the tablecloth, which reach loosely beyond it; the sheets of the open book turn to and fro; and the fruit at any moment will fall over the rim of the bowl. But paramount, the overall composition opens upward like a fan, the sides of which are the axis of the guitar and pass through the handle of the fruitbowl; yet they seem to give no real support to these two objects.

Pointing out these definite changes does not prove that they are caused by the proximity of death, but such a "caving in" seems tantamount to a physical and moral disintegration which only so irrevocable and hopeless a premonition could have caused. After 1920 did he, too, like La Fresnaye, feel the need for a more caressing, a more lyrical and sensuous world than the steel and concrete one with which he had identified himself and which seemed so characteristic of him? Evidence of this can be found in *Le Canigou* (Fig. 6) wherein Gris discloses a completely different personality and a lyricism so far unknown. Even here, however, the artist, as liberated as he seems to be from the austerity and rigidity of former years, is still limiting his escape. While the landscape opens up new horizons, propitious to dreams and to hope, the view of the snow-capped mountains is carefully halted right and left by the frames of the window. Though the window is wide open and offers a definite escape for the eyes and the mind to wander beyond the immediate surroundings, they are recalled by the insistence of the table and its accompanying guitar. The escape is perhaps most definitely expressed in the light transparent blues, newly introduced in the artist's palette, which give space and freshness to the composition—probably his greatest lyrical expression.

There is a revealing passage in a letter written by Gris in 1915:

I never seem to be able to find any room in my pictures for that sensitive, sensuous side which I feel ought always to be there. Maybe I'm wrong to look for the pictorial qualities of an earlier age in a new form of art. At all events I find my pictures excessively cold. . . . Well, it can't be helped. One must after all paint as one is oneself. My mind is too precise to go dirtying a blue or twisting a straight line.<sup>6</sup>

Here it would appear that Gris himself acknowledged a lack of inherent lyricism in his words "one must paint as one is oneself." For five years he continues to work in the manner which he finds "excessively cold" and it is only

in 1920 that he breaks away and then writes, after the first serious illness: "I think it will be impossible to take up work again exactly where I left off." Thus it would seem hardly coincidental that it is in that year that he makes such a fundamental rupture with the past, nor would it appear to be the result of further theories on Cubism. Did he not need this threatening shock of illness to reflect on the frailty of life, on the "vanity of things" and to unloose the propelling forces which had been latent longings in the strata of his subconscious? The logic of this *processus* would seem inescapable.

Having thus examined some of the works of La Fresnaye and Gris what conclusions can be reached? Whether to the last moment La Fresnaye's work follows an evolution and Gris', on the contrary, shows a definitely new style after the fateful date of 1920, are questions which will differ with the personality of each reader, his individual predilections, his sympathies and his reactions based upon receptiveness to certain emotional elements. However, the facts are undeniably present; the pulsations of a feverish mind, the increased tempo of the imagination, the gnawing anguish of the knowledge that life is slowly ebbing and the hour-glass emptying are pathetically imparted to us in these *in extremis* creations.

<sup>1</sup> The *oeuvre* of Roger de la Fresnaye may be divided into three periods: the first before 1910; the second between 1910 and 1914; the third while he was in the army and through his last work until his death in 1925.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted here that this short study has purposely omitted those drawings and portraits which show distortions of pain and suffering, a number of which were carried out, some representing the artist himself. These are rendered in the same graphic manner as those referred to here, but tragedy is an inherent quality of the subjects themselves and thus too easy to "read" to need further comment. These are left out to make clearer a point, but by no means to belittle these tragically lyrical sketches, so strong and spontaneous.

<sup>3</sup> "... in his 1910-1914 period ... the human figures play a secondary role; they show no emotion; they are part of a drama, and like the actors of a Greek tragedy, their movements are rigidly limited." Seligman, *Roger de la Fresnaye*, 1945, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, *Juan Gris: His Life and Work*, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Reproduced by courtesy of the Buchholz Gallery.

<sup>6</sup> Kahnweiler, *op. cit.*, p. 89, footnote 2.

## THE HYDRA REBORN IN THE NEW WORLD

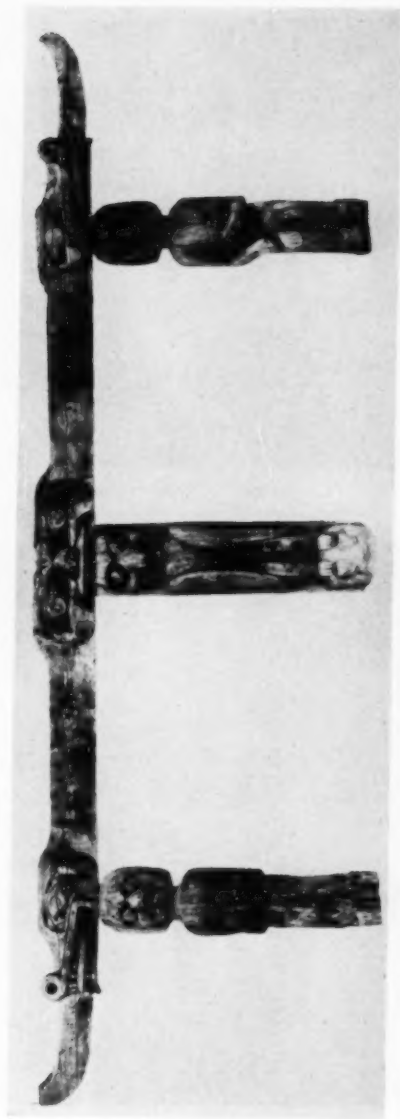
By MARIUS BARBEAU

THE *Sisiutl* and the Maiden have recently made their entry into the Detroit Institute of Arts. Painted on a large assemblage of carved red cedar boards (H. 4 ft. 10 in.; W. 19 ft. 6 in.) from the North Pacific Coast, they consist of a human face with owl-like ears between two dragon heads showing savage teeth and thrusting flamboyant tongues right and left. The whole flat surface on the human face and the dragon heads is filled with stylized hands, ears, fins, feathers, eyes, backbone, all of them typical of Haida carvings and Chilkat blankets made by Alaskan Indians. Wide open and palms out, the hands are raised upwards under the human face; they remind one of a similar pattern in Egyptian hieroglyphs. This work of art, native American yet quite modern, is a strange paradox. Primitive, it is from the hands of a Kwakiutl fisherman of the salt waters—Yahungwalæ or Ookelackelice (Dick Price)—yet it belongs to our time both in date and spirit.

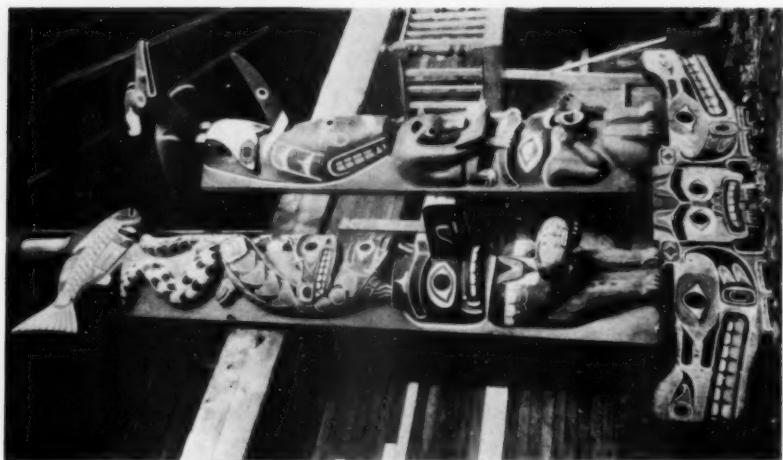
Its date is 1920 and it was meant as a memorial for a leading chief at Fort Rupert on northern Vancouver Island. Actually it never stood over the grave of the deceased, as his family was unable to muster the price. So the trader Cadewallader purchased it from the maker and stored it in his hen house close to the tidewaters, where the artist Arthur Price found it while engaged on research for the National Museum of Canada. Its style is akin to the abstractions of our painters, yet it belongs to the totemic art after it had freed itself of crude realism. Because of its large size and obscure source, it is with some difficulty that it could find its berth in an art gallery. Now it hangs on a wall in the Pre-Columbian Gallery at Detroit. It might have stood as impressively beside a Dragon head of the Mexican pyramids, or with the Plumed Serpent of North American mythology, or together with the towering monster of Chinese art or the Hydra in the Greco-Roman statuary. It belongs to the same story in words and plastic form as the gigantic serpent once slain by Hercules. Its seven or nine heads, when any of them was cut off by the hero, were at once replaced by two others, twice as terrifying. Elsewhere the same myth becomes the *Dragon de feu* or the *Bête-à-sept-têtes* of French and other European folk tales, just as it is a striking feature in the Apocalypse tapestries woven at Angers in France at the end of the fifteenth century. These famous tapestries, recently exhibited



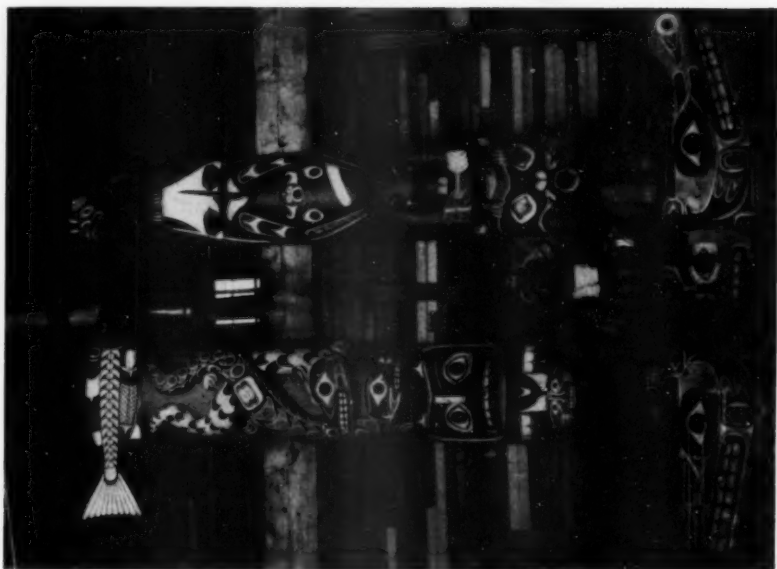
*Fig. 1. DICK PRICE (Yahungwaḷə), A Kwakiutl Carving, The Sisiul  
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 2. A Kwakiutl House Front, The Sisiul  
Northern Vancouver Island*



*Fig. 4. Same as Figure 3*



*Fig. 3. Captain Jack's House Poles (Nootka)  
Friendly Cove, Vancouver Island*

in America, show the apostle St. John confronted by a seven-headed Dragon; the Dragon holds a beautiful young woman, called the Harlot, under his magic spell. In a Tournai tapestry of the same period (Cleveland Art Museum), illustrating a similar tale, that of the *Dragon de feu*, a beautiful girl is chained to a pillar in the mountain, where she will soon be devoured by a seven-headed monster. But at the last moment the hero rides up the mountain, cuts off the heads of the Dragon one after another, frees the princess and brings her back to the castle of her royal parents, where she is married with great pomp to her triumphant champion. In other words, this universal theme is the same as that of the classical Perseus and Andromeda. Ageless like Asiatic and European culture, out of the cradle of civilization in the Far East, it has traveled East and West, until it has visited every country in Europe, and at the same time crossed Bering Strait into prehistoric America. It also escorted some of the white settlers across the Atlantic into their new homesteads in the woodlands.

The *Sisiutl* (Fig. 1) of the Kwakiutl Indians as seen in the Pre-Columbian Gallery of the Detroit Institute of Arts, bears only two heads, just as in some of the Aztec carvings in Mexico. Elsewhere its kindred are either single or many-headed. Among the Koriaks of Eastern Siberia, under a different name, it holds up several heads. But among the tribes of the North Pacific Coast it also is well known with only one head. In the same village of Fort Rupert where it was found, a huge totem pole stood (it has now been removed to the University of British Columbia) with several carved figures, foremost among them the *Sisiutl* or Dragon head down. This single-headed monster stands over a double-headed serpent or Dragon changed into a man holding up a copper shield. At the top of the pole, sixty feet high, stands a mythical woman, and below her the Qolus—a minor Thunderbird.

The other tribes of the same sea coast know the Dragon under various names. For instance, the Nootkas of Western Vancouver Island call it *Haitlik*, and believe it to be a Mountain-Snake (Figs. 3, 4). Also double-headed, it reminds them of olden times when brave ancestors attacked the fierce monster in its lair. This reptile is still supposed to be the maker of lightning when it associates with the Thunderbird. The Kwakiutl of Cape Scott, just north of Vancouver Island, give a striking account of the *Tsiakish* or a Hydra-like monster living beneath the sea and swallowing canoes with all aboard. When, one day long ago, a chief was walking eastward close to the sea shore, he met Kosa, a young girl, and bade her go and fetch water for him to drink. She refused because of the dreaded monster with a huge mouth guarding the spring and swallowing



all intruders. As soon as she agreed to obey, she put her *Sisiutl* belt on and the vampire instantly killed her. The chief, a wizard, sang an incantation which caused the beast to burst open and disgorge all the people it had devoured. Coming back to life, they limped forward or tripped sideways; their bones were all mixed up. But the chief soon sorted them out, and they became the present Koskimo tribe.

Among the Northern tribes of the Pacific Coast—Haida, Tsimshyan, and Tlingit, this myth assumes another form under various names: these names are *Wenaamaw* or Woodworm (Haida), *Rhtsenawsub* or Single-headed Caterpillar and double-headed *Larah-wæse* (Tsimshyan), and *Tluqurb* or Scrubworm (Tlingit). Here in this group the theme of the Hydra is at its best; it prevails in the wood carvings (Figs. 5-7, 9), and shares some of its features with Asiatic and European prototypes.

The Dragon, among the Tsimshyans and their neighbors, has become a charm in the sacred bundles of the medicine men. Made of ivory, it is either single or double-headed; the heads being placed back to back. Or it appears in the shape of wood carvings illustrating the familiar myth. These carvings (when they are not mere miniatures for sale to white people) stand inside the houses as corner posts, or in front as totem poles.

The Tsimshyans know the Caterpillar (*Rhtsenawsub*) very well; its home formerly was Krhain Island, where the town of Prince Rupert now stands. When the folk were gathering wood and piling it up in the chief's house, a glowing grub fell upon the ground near the chief's daughter. Unaware that it was a monster in disguise, she picked it up, took it as a pet, and lavished her affection upon it. She suckled it, and the pet at once grew much larger. Her parents, who guarded her closely, as the chiefs' daughters always were, urged her to part with the strange creature, but she resisted and became more secretive. While she took care of it as her child, it began to burrow a hiding place under the house, and kept growing and burrowing. Ever hungry, it scented the food boxes wherever they were stored. Gnawing its way to them it bored through the bottom and emptied them all. The Caterpillar, now of huge size, stretched underground from one end of the village to the other. Famine stricken, the people at last caught it draining the last food box at the rear end of the village. They dug it out and found that it had a head at both ends of its snake-like body—double-headed it was like the *Larah-wæse*. They chopped it into segments, decided to leave their ill-fated village and abandon the young woman there to her fate. Even today, the Indians at Prince Rupert point to the



depressions in the mountain behind the town: these are the segments of the double-headed monster.

The Haidas of Skidegate on the Queen Charlotte Islands know the same tale with minor differences. One night an old man lying down in his lodge heard something gnawing wood. The next morning his boxes of candle-fish oil were empty. The people, on the alert because all the oil boxes had run dry, discovered a great worm hiding underground and gorging on the people's food. As they were about to kill it they learned that it was the pet of the head chief's daughter. When it was still small she had suckled it from her breasts as it would stick its mouth up from its burrow. Then it had begun to pilfer the food caches everywhere in the village. The warriors, with large knives tied on to long shafts in the manner of spears, fought the huge worm. They found it difficult to pierce its body. It was covered with scales like those of a large fish. Had they failed, it would have destroyed the whole tribe.

A Stikine River version of the same story, recorded among the Haidas of Massett, concludes otherwise. After the people had banded together to overcome the enormous worm, they decided that the chief's daughter, because of her baneful fancy for her pet, should refrain from marrying. She stayed in hiding behind the village. When late in life she married an old recluse, her husband, to celebrate the event, gave away a great deal of food. But it all changed into snails, worms and frogs.

The symbolism of this world-wide myth of the Hydra or Dragon is clearly brought out in a Tlingit version recorded by Dr. J. R. Swanton (Bureau of American Ethnology *Bulletin*, XXXIX (1909), 151, 152).

The chief's daughter at Quqarhdun in Alaska had a Woodworm (*Tluqurb*) for a pet. She fed it from her breasts, then out of the food boxes of her parents. When it reached the length of a fathom she composed a cradle song: "It has a face already. Sit up right here!" Another day her song was: "It has a mouth already. Sit right up!" After her people had heard the same songs ever so often, they began to wonder, and her mother spied on her. She saw a frightful worm between the boxes in the seclusion hut and became alarmed.

Meanwhile the people in the village found their oil boxes empty, as the big worm had been stealing the oil. The chief tried to induce his daughter to come out of her seclusion. Her aunt, who was very fond of her, he said, wanted to see her, for she needed her help. That day the song she sang to her pet was: "Son, I have had a bad dream." Of her mother she asked: "Give me my new marten robes." Then she walked out of the hut with a rope tied like a belt around her

waist and sang a new song: "They have begged me long enough to come out. Here I am, just as if I were about to die. Parting with my love means death."

A great uproar broke out. She cried, for she knew that the people were slaying the great worm which she had fed from her breasts. After a long struggle had ended, she heard that the monster had died. She cried out mournfully:

"I had to leave you, my son, and they have killed you. I was blamed for bringing you up. It could not be helped, it was not my own doing. Now, you shall be heard of all over the world. You shall be claimed by a great clan as its own, and be looked upon as supreme."

Indeed, the Caterpillar or the *Sisiutl* of the North Pacific Coast, elsewhere known as the Dragon or the Hydra, has been claimed by many natives the world over as their sacred emblem. The object of myths and tales, it has been illustrated countless times in the plastic arts of at least three continents. "It has been heard of all over the world," as in the Tlingit song. In places on the sea coasts of America, the blinking of the monster's eyes produced thunder; elsewhere, its breath gushed out like poisonous flames; and its voice was thunder. Another Tlingit myth, also quoted by Dr. Swanton, concludes with a variant:

A girl once had offended the Snail. The next morning the people saw her at a distance as she stood on the face of a high cliff with the big snail coiled about her. Her brothers, bent upon rescuing her, carved wings, dressed up like birds, flew up to her and brought her down. But henceforth they remained birds. They were the Thunders.



*Fig. 5. An Old Tlingit Carving,  
House Post  
Klukwan, Alaska*



*Fig. 6. Tlingit Carving,  
An Interior House Post  
Klukwan, Alaska*



*Fig. 7. Tlingit Carving  
Seattle, University of  
Washington Museum*



*Fig. 8. Argillite Carving  
Prince Rupert, B. C.,  
Cunningham Collection*



*Fig. 9. A Tlingit  
Totem Pole  
Klawock, Prince  
of Wales Island*

## SHORTER NOTES:

### WILLIAM BLAKE'S DEBT TO JAMES GILLRAY

By DAVID V. ERDMAN

QUEER exchanges and borrowings take place in a community of artists when they are working on as different planes of reference as were Henry Fuseli, William Blake and James Gillray in London toward the end of the eighteenth century. Fuseli found Blake "damned good to steal from." Gillray boldly metamorphosed into satire the sensationalism of Fuseli's *Night Mare* and *Three Witches* and his Miltonic *Sin and Death*. And I believe the account is balanced by a more secretive borrowing—the transfer of themes from the political cartoons of Gillray to the multi-symbolic "illuminations" of Blake's etched and water-colored "Prophetic Books."<sup>1</sup>

Blake's *Europe, a Prophecy*, etched in 1794, rests a dizzying superstructure of myth and symbol on the historical sequence of events which led England into a European war in February, 1793 and made "Every house a den, every man bound" during the Pitt Terror. In Blake's text a swift survey of the eighteen hundred years of Christendom slows down to record in detail such ephemeral sensations of 1791 and 1792 as the dismissal of Lord Chancellor Thurlow in the latter year—a matter which would now be quite forgotten except for Gillray's caricatures of May 24 and June 9 immortalizing the fall of this "Wolsey of the Woollack" and his discomfiture as Satan encountering Death (Pitt) and Sin (the Queen).

Blake's attention may have been called to the Thurlow episode by Gillray's parody of Fuseli, but in *Europe* the illuminations supplement rather than illustrate the text, and Blake has attempted no pictorial version himself, although his later *Satan Comes to the Gates of Hell*, especially the "B" version, is reminiscent of both Fuseli and Gillray.<sup>2</sup> In Blake's mythology Pitt becomes Rintrah, however, and the picture of Rintrah on page 5 of *Europe* does owe something to Gillray's *Sin, Death and the Devil*. Both Pitts are dark-skinned and naked, though Blake has kept only the prim mouth of Gillray's and otherwise has exchanged his scepter for a crusader's sword, his ornate crown for a spiked one such as Death will wear in *Satan Comes*, and has veiled his body in a network which is like the scales on the serpentine legs of Gillray's

Queen but suggests also chain armor. In an all too esoteric irony Blake has replaced the ugly figure of the Queen as Sin with two innocent-looking and angel-winged women (in Gillray it is Thurlow who wears such wings) for that was how Queen Charlotte and Queen Marie-Antoinette were pictured to the "youth of England" who must fight in the wars they caused.

The connection here is admittedly tenuous, though the relation to Blake's own version of the Miltonic episode strengthens it. Much more direct and simply demonstrable, however, is the influence of two Gillray cartoons on the two pages of *Europe's* "Preludium." Blake's first page (Fig. 1) shows a youthful traveler ambushed by a sharp-nosed man gripping a dagger in one hand and pointing to heaven with the other. The face of this potential assassin may be found in Gillray's print of December 30, 1792: *The Dagger Scene; or, The Plot discovered*. The man is Edmund Burke, Cassandra of British conservatism. As the climax of a war-inciting speech on the Alien Bill, during the special session of Parliament which prepared England emotionally for war against the new French Republic, Burke suddenly produced a steel dagger "and with much vehemence of action threw it on the floor" (as the Parliamentary report states) in evidence that British Jacobins were conspiring with French Jacobins to massacre the rulers of Britain. "This," he exclaimed, pointing to the dagger, "is what you are to gain with an alliance with France...."

Gillray's mockery of this scene needed no Fuselian source. Burke himself had provided sufficient stage effect—the dagger, the pointing finger, the "startled" adversaries. These, Fox, Sheridan, and Michael Angelo Taylor, had in turn initiated the mockery, for they had been taken aback not by the "accusation" but by the histrionics, and Sheridan's actual retort had been: "You have thrown down a knife; where is the fork?" Thomas Wright believed the "supercilious mouth and the excited features" of Burke were drawn by Gillray with "ludicrous fidelity."<sup>3</sup>

Blake, working a year or so later when war and terror had become realities, erased the ludicrous and treated the dagger episode as a symbolic prelude to "the terrors of struggling times." In Blake's transformation Parliament is represented by a rocky cave (as in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*), the pointing finger is put to other use (pointing upward, perhaps to indicate a hypocritical allusion to the rewards of dying for one's country), and the dagger is put back into Burke's hand to signify that his deed is the real "plot," his speech a dagger waylaying Everyman on his peaceful pilgrimage. For





Fig. 1. WILLIAM BLAKE  
Europe, a Prophecy (page 1)

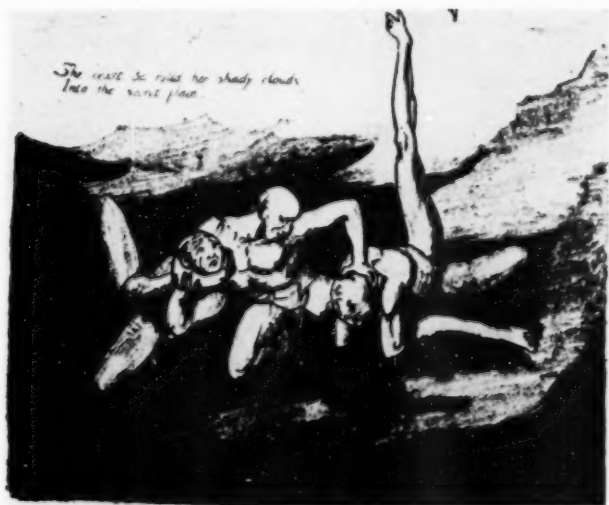


Fig. 2. WILLIAM BLAKE, Second Page of "Europe, A Prophecy"  
(detail)



Fig. 3. JAMES GILLRAY, *Slough of Despond*



Fig. 5. WILLIAM BLAKE  
"I Want! I Want!" from  
*The Gates of Paradise*



Fig. 4. JAMES GILLRAY, *The Impeachment; or  
Father of the Gang Turned King's Evidence*



Fig. 6. JAMES GILLRAY, *The Infant Hercules*

Blake has turned an editorial cartoon into the symbol of a modern Pilgrim's Progress, with Bunyan-like earnestness.

Lesser figures at the bottom of the page do not seem to derive from Gillray's cartoon, unless the round face draped in symbols of gloom (bat-wings, etc.) is that of Charles Fox, gloomy here but especially so in Gillray's *Slough of Despond* (January 2, 1793) (Fig. 3) where he is shown as Bunyan's pilgrim in the "Miry Slough" and where, as in the Blake figure, only head and hands are visible.<sup>4</sup> The figure hurtling head downward with a weight chained to his wrists is probably Blake's Orc, spirit of independence and revolt in *America* (1793), here probably signifying the English radicals who were arrested during the anti-Jacobin terror of 1792-94.

The second page of the "Preludium" (Fig. 2) may have been suggested by either or both of two earlier Gillray prints. Blake depicts a bald-headed wrestler strangling two opponents while a third escapes and climbs a cloud. In Gillray's *The Impeachment; or, the Father of the Gang turned King's Evidence* (May, 1791) (Fig. 4) Burke is shown laying hands on his former associates, Fox and Sheridan. In *The Infant Hercules* (February, 1784) (Fig. 6) the young Pitt is shown dealing even more forcibly with Fox and North.

Blake's bald trio may be these or other statesmen, minus wigs. The strangler is unlike Burke but may be Pitt grown older. He does not resemble the Pitt of Gillray's caricatures but is not unlike the Pitt of Blake's *Rintrah*. In the text I find reference to the brief "hour" of the ministry of Fox and North as a momentary break in the long rule of king-dominated governments. With the king's aid Pitt rose to power, according to Gillray's picture, by "strangling" these opponents. Several years later Blake would paint Nelson and Pitt in their "spiritual forms" strangling and harrowing nations. At the time he wrote *Europe* he considered Pitt's ministry responsible for the "mind-forg'd manacles" he heard "in every voice, in every ban" (*London*). Blake's vision of struggling times, whether or not any resemblance to living persons was intended, naturally but curiously drew upon the graphic journalism of Gillray.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Blake and Fuseli were intimates. Blake and Gillray were fellow engravers and exact contemporaries, but the degree of their acquaintance is unknown.

<sup>2</sup> Reproduced in C. H. Collins Baker, *Catalogue of William Blake's Drawings and Paintings in the Huntington Library*, San Marino, California, 1938. Baker notes that Blake's "Sin" seems to have been based on Flaxman's invention of Scylla and adds: "It is interesting to compare Gillray's 'Sin, Death and the Devil' . . ."

(p. 5).

<sup>3</sup> *The Works of James Gillray*, ed. by Thomas Wright, London, Chatto and Windus, n.d., p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> Compare the symbol of "The Straight Gate; or the way to the Patriot's Paradise" in this picture, a ladder pointed toward a crescent moon, with the ninth emblem in Blake's *The Gates of Paradise* (1793), a ladder touching the crescent moon and the motto "I Want! I Want!" (Fig. 5). In all these examples the fact that the directions in Gillray's pictures are always the reverse of those in Blake's confirms the hypothesis of borrowing, since in engraving and etching Blake worked naturally in reverse. Gillray's *Gate* and Blake's *Gates* are close in date—January 1 and May 7. The Winged head may derive from a vignette on Paine's bed in Gillray's *Tom Paine's Nightly Pest* (December, 1792). There Fox's wings are angelic, but bat-like wings can have been borrowed from the diabolic "Pest" in the same picture—for of course in Blake's symbolism Angels are Tories and Devils Whigs or better.

<sup>5</sup> Still other instances could be cited in a longer Note.

## THE SANCHI TORSO: ICONOGRAPHY AND STYLE

By BENJAMIN ROWLAND, JR.

THE use of iconographical evidence for purposes of dating and stylistic analysis in works of Oriental art seems so inevitable a part of the scholar's procedure that one is always surprised that these aids are not utilized more often and more intelligently. A case in point is the emblem of the antelope skin worn by Hindu and Buddhist deities alike in their representations in Indian sculpture and painting. The classic literature of India—the *Vedas* and especially the *Sathapatha Brahmana*—are replete with references to the black buck, variously known as *kṛṣṇa sāra*, *kṛṣṇa mṛga*, or, in its flayed form, *Kṛṣṇajina*.<sup>1</sup> It will be the purpose of this article to examine this attribute with a view to arriving at a proper dating for the so-called Sāñchī torso in the Indian section of the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 1).

The uses of the skin of the black buck in Vedic ritual are so well known that there is no reason to do more than summarize its function with reference to our present interest: its employment as an attribute of the Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas. We gather that from very early Aryan times the black antelope skin featured prominently in sacrificial and burial rites; for example, the dead were laid out on the skin of the black buck; two skins sewn together were symbolical of the celestial and mortal worlds; and a skin was worn by the sacrificer in purification rites.<sup>2</sup> The wearing of the black antelope skin is also enjoined on the Brahmin student, not for any totemic reason, but for the power derived from it: the wearer is presumably rendered invisible to the demons by the

black color of the hair.<sup>3</sup> The wearing of the antelope pelt figured in the ceremony for the reborn. We may perhaps conclude that all of these rites simply represent an assignment of magical properties to what was originally the natural garment of the early Vedic Indians, like the buffalo skin of the American Indians. It is to be expected that the antelope skin soon became attached to various deities of the Vedic Pantheon: it adds to the power of Indra, and the R̥ṣi Narāyāna's position as Greatest of Beings stems from its wearing.<sup>4</sup>

The antelope held by Siva in many of his forms refers to his conquest of such an animal loosed upon him by the R̥ṣis; his wearing of the antelope skin, as in the Deogarh relief of the ascetic Dikṣinamurti (c. 600 A.D.), is an inheritance of the early Vedic association of the skin in ritual.<sup>5</sup> The fashion of wearing the skin passed over the left shoulder with the head over the heart is known as the *upavīti* arrangement and it is not without significance that the disposition follows the usual arrangement of the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*), almost suggesting that the two were interchangeable. Occasionally, as in another relief at Deogarh, the attribute is assigned to Brahman.<sup>6</sup>

Our special interest in this attribute lies in its assimilation into the iconography of Buddhism as part of the regalia of various Bodhisattvas. It appears to me of particular significance for the proper dating and identification of the famous torso from Sāñchī in the Victoria and Albert Museum. When first discovered by Sir Alexander Cunningham, this object was thought to belong to a *dharmacakra* pillar at Sāñchī with an inscription in early Gupta characters.<sup>7</sup> It is quite apparent, however, if only from the completely different stone, that the torso had nothing whatever to do with the memorial *stambha*.<sup>8</sup> I have often wondered whether the dating of this piece in the Gupta period, followed by all subsequent writers, like Coomaraswamy and Codrington,<sup>9</sup> was not an instance of the same fallacy whereby Chinese scholars have always assigned paintings of any distinction to early periods on the basis of their excellence. This might be called the perfectionist fallacy whereby a work of any monumentality whatever, regardless of style, must by reason of its excellence be assigned to a period of known classical perfection. It is the same fallacy whereby, in the neo-Classical period, the Apollo Belvedere was assigned to the great period of Greek art. Actually, although a work of exquisite refinement, the Sāñchī fragment seems to have little in common with carving of known Gupta manufacture.

Leaving the antelope momentarily for an examination of style, we find that the hard meticulous carving of the ornaments and the precise linear definition

of every element in the Sāñchī fragment almost threatens to distract from the plastic volume of the figure as a whole. This is totally different in character from the carving of the typical Gupta Bodhisattvas of Sārnāth in which the accessories are so suppressed that one senses only the swelling softness of the sculptor's realization of stone flesh enclosed in the moving curves of the silhouette.<sup>10</sup> Again, the nature of the torque and elaborate belt is quite different from any representation of jewelry in Gupta images; in these latter there is usually only a very simple pearl necklace or necklaces and a purely utilitarian and unornamented support for the *dhōti*. It is only in examples of early medieval Buddhist sculpture that the tendencies noted in the Sāñchī torso become apparent. It will be noted, for example, that in the carvings of Bodhisattvas of the Pāla school of Bengal, dating from the eighth century and later, we find precisely the same metallic hardness of definition and elaboration of surface textural detail already described in the Sāñchī torso. Again, the kind of necklace represented in the Sāñchī fragment, a heavy confection of gold or silver filagree with raised ornaments superimposed and a border of little bells is precisely the same kind of jewelry that ornaments the Bodhisattva statues of the early medieval period. This fondness for metal jewelry with bells attached apparently is a characteristic of all late north Indian metalwork. It will be noted further that in the Pāla figure chosen for comparison (Fig. 2) the softness of the flesh is suggested by the identical device of the constricting belt raising a welt of flesh below the navel. In both cases we have an illustration of a technical method going through all periods of Indian sculpture: the suggestion of the character of flesh in stone by the contrast between the hard, cold definition of metal accessories with the rounded smooth planes that interlock to give the structure of the body. The rather inarticulate joining of neck and torso, always present in medieval Buddhist sculpture is not found in Gupta work. These impertinent insinuations that I have already made regarding the antiquity of the Sāñchī torso bring us once more to the antelope skin.

This attribute is specifically associated with various Bodhisattvas of the Vajrayāna or Tantric phase of Mahāyāna;<sup>11</sup> as such it survives in the later art of Tibet and Nepal. From the *Sādhanamāla* and other Tantric compilations we gather that the antelope may figure as a part of the dress of various forms of Avalokiteśvara, notably Padmapāñi<sup>12</sup> and Khasarpaṇa<sup>13</sup> Avalokiteśvara. Obviously, this is only one illustration of that process whereby the Bodhisattva of Mercy takes on various Saivite emblems like the *triśūla*, the serpent, and, here, the antelope skin,<sup>14</sup> a concrete result of that evil day for Buddhism when





*Fig. 1. Torso of a Bodhisattva from Sāñchī  
(7th-9th Century A.D.)  
London, Victoria and Albert Museum*



*Fig. 2. Padmapāni from Bengal  
(8th-9th Century A.D.)  
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts*

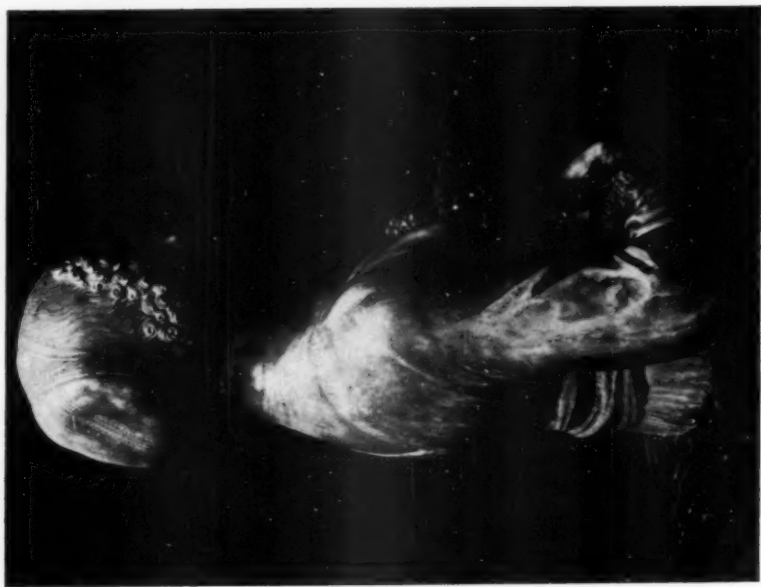


Fig. 1. ANDREA DEL VERROCCHIO, *Marble Bust*  
Florence, Museo Nazionale



Fig. 2. HERE ATTRIBUTED TO LEONARDO DA VINCI,  
*Simonetta Vespucci*  
Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, Kress Collection

Asanga went up to heaven and came down with the Tantras and the Hindu pantheon.<sup>15</sup> The assumption of the antelope skin of Vedic origin is only another indication of the gradual Hinduization of Buddhism, like the equipping of the Bodhisattvas with the *śaktis* of Siva and his court.<sup>16</sup>

It will be observed in the Pāla statue chosen for illustration that the antelope skin worn in *upavṛṭi* fashion is a prominent part of the iconography; the presence of the additional attributes of the *dhyāni* Buddha in the crown and the lotus held in the left hand should make it possible for us to recognize a representation of Padmapāni, a non-Tantric form of Avalokiteśvara.<sup>17</sup> Most likely the Sāñchī fragment portrayed the same deity. The appropriateness of this Brahmanic emblem for Padmapāni is confirmed by the Nepalese Vajrayāna tenet that this Bodhisattva was charged by Adi Buddha with the creation of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva as governors of the cosmic machine.<sup>18</sup>

I do not wish, by seeming insistence on the antelope skin as a means of dating, to be guilty of creating an iconographical fallacy in the process of demolishing the perfectionist fallacy. The fact remains, however, that (1) pre-medieval portrayals of the Bodhisattvas do not have this emblem; (2) I have never found it in any known piece of non-Vajrayāna Buddhist sculpture; (3) it is omnipresent as an iconographical decoration in statues of the medieval school of Bengal. This, taken together with the stylistic resemblance of the Sāñchī torso to medieval works of sculpture leads to the conclusion that it is in actuality a much later work than has been supposed, perhaps even as late as the eighth or ninth century A.D. Admittedly superior to the run of the mill examples of medieval Buddhist art, its excellence is only a perfection of the same style, as, for example, the Hermes of Praxiteles is a perfect example of sculpture in the style of fourth century Greece.

The Sāñchī torso, obviously, was not made locally; the fine-grained dark reddish sandstone is quite different from the coarse local stone used by the carvers of the famous gateways. It seems likely that it must have been an importation, presumably from Central India, since it approximates the stone of the Bhārhut stūpa rail.<sup>19</sup> Buddhist activity at Sāñchī extended well into the medieval period<sup>20</sup> and most likely this piece was brought to the site when Sāñchī was politically joined with north central India and the Ganges Valley.

Iconographically the torso in London cannot be earlier than the sixth century; technically it clearly approaches the style of medieval carving of the eighth and ninth centuries. It should not seem too heretical or disturbing to

remove this object from its niche in the Gupta period to what seems to me its proper place as a great example of Buddhist sculpture in the medieval era.

- <sup>1</sup> This animal, in its natural form, was a popular subject for the miniature painters of Jehangir and Shah Jehan. See F. R. Martin, *The Miniature Painting of Persia, India, and Turkey*, London, 1912, pl. 217.
- <sup>2</sup> L. D. Barnett, *Antiquities of India*, London, 1913, pp. 147, 162, 176 f.
- <sup>3</sup> A. B. Keith, *Harvard Oriental Studies*, vol. 3, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, Cambridge, 1925, I, 301.
- <sup>4</sup> T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, I, part I, Madras, 1914, 275-276.
- <sup>5</sup> Rao, *ibid.*, vol. II, part I, Madras, 1916, pl. LXXI; and V. A. Smith, *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, Oxford, 1911, pls. XXIV, XXV.
- <sup>6</sup> Rao, *op. cit.*, vol. I, part I, pl. XXXII. In this regard, cf. Waddell's statement (*The Buddhism of Tibet*, Cambridge, 1934, p. 357) that the iconography of Avalokiteśvara derives from that of Brahma.
- <sup>7</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India Report*, Calcutta, 1880, X, 62-64, pl. XXI.
- <sup>8</sup> Cf. Sir John Marshall and A. Foucher, *The Monuments of Sanchi*, n. d., p. 50, n. 1.
- <sup>9</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, New York, 1927, p. 58: "Early Gupta or perhaps late Kusana"; K. de B. Codrington, *Ancient India*, London, 1926, p. 13, pl. XXXIXC: "Late Gupta, early 6th century."
- <sup>10</sup> Cf. Codrington, *op. cit.*, pl. 39D; D. R. Sahni and J. Ph. Vogel, *Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sarnath*, Calcutta, 1914, pl. XIIIb.
- <sup>11</sup> Tantra (lit. "treatise") is a debased form of the *yoga-carya* school of Buddhism that made its appearance in the 7th century. Its principal features are the cult of the *sakti* or female energy of the deities and gradual "Hinduization" of the entire Mahāyāna pantheon. For a definition of Vajrayāna see B. Bhattacharya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, Oxford, 1924, pp. 17 ff.
- <sup>12</sup> A. Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, Oxford, 1928, p. 62. Padmapāni is one of the five Divine Bodhisattvas of the Mahāyāna pantheon, an emanation of the Dhyaṇi Buddha Amitābha.
- <sup>13</sup> W. Clark, *Two Lamaist Pantheons*, Cambridge, 1937, II, 202, 6A45. It may well be that the famous statue of Avalokiteśvara on Mt. Potala, described by Hsüan-tsang (S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, London, 1906, II, 233), may have been a representation of Khasarpana who is specifically associated with this site by Taranatha (A. Schiefner, *Taranatha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien*, St. Petersburg, 1869, pp. 143-144). The passage in the *Hsi-yü-chi*, describes an image of Avalokiteśvara "coming and going" (Beal, *op. cit.*, 233.) Actually the characters may have been an attempt to translate into Chinese the meaning of Khasarpana "moving through the air" (Schiefner, *op. cit.*, p. 144, and A. Foucher, *Étude sur l'Iconographie bouddhique que de l'Inde*, Paris, 1905, p. 25). Khasarpana Avalokiteśvara appears in China as Sui Yueh Kūan Shih Yin (lit. "Water-Moon-Kuan-Yin"), a form that presumably incorporates the description in the *Sādhanamālā* (Bhattacharya, p. 37): "His person is resplendent as the rays of a crore of moons . . . (he) sits on a moon over the double lotus, etc."
- <sup>14</sup> Mr. Schuyler Cammann has pointed out to me a further Saivite aspect of this Bodhisattva in his assimilation into his name of one of Śiva's titles: i.e., Avalokiteśvara=Avalokita & Īvara. Cf. Foucher, *Iconographie bouddhique*, Paris, 1900, p. 117.
- <sup>15</sup> Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- <sup>16</sup> The earliest examples (7th century) of this iconography of the antelope skin were to be seen, in the 19th century, in now destroyed frescoes in Caves II and IV at Ajanta. Cf. J. Burgess, *Notes on the Buddha Rock Temples of Ajanta*, Bombay, 1879, pp. 35, 62; and A. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, London, 1901, p. 193.
- <sup>17</sup> A. K. Gordon, *The Iconography of Tibetan Lamaism*, New York, 1939, p. 64 and pl. opp. p. 66, and Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 63. By the "non-Tantric" form of a Bodhisattva is meant that the deity is worshipped and represented without a female energy or *sakti* and without the multiple arms also taken over from Hindu iconography.
- <sup>18</sup> H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal*, London, 1880, II, 116; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
- <sup>19</sup> This is the red sandstone of Central India, quarried from the Vindhya hills. It is darker and finer in texture than the red Sikri sandstone used at Mathurā (Muttar) in all periods. See N. G. Majumdar, *A Guide to the Sculptures in the Indian Museum*, Part I, Delhi, 1937, p. 11.
- <sup>20</sup> Cf. Sir J. Marshall, *A Guide to Sanchi*, Delhi, 1936, p. 23.

## AGAIN THE SIMONETTA BUST By WILLIAM E. SUIDA

SINCE I first mentioned Leonardo's name in connection with the bust of the *Bella Simonetta* in the National Gallery, Washington (*Art Quarterly*, XI (1948), 3-8), the fascinating problem has continuously occupied my mind. I compared the impressions I had received in the past from

different sculptures, drawings and paintings, and I collected some reproductions which I feel obliged to make easily accessible to those students who are especially interested in this problem.

Fig. 2 shows the *Simonetta* bust in profile seen from behind over the left shoulder. It gives a new aspect of that unique combination of utmost sensibility and an almost archaic austerity. Everybody will agree that Leonardo's silver-point drawing at Windsor (No. 12513) (Fig. 4), showing numerous busts of women, is strikingly similar in the motives as well as in the spiritual concept. Some of these busts are seen exactly from the same angle. Another Windsor drawing (No. 12505) (Fig. 3), a young lady in profile, even in details such as the coif covering the head and the wave of hair at the temple is closest to the *Simonetta* bust.

In these details a fundamental difference from Verrocchio's Bargello bust (Fig. 1) can be observed. Here the coif with all the minute hems and the stiff curls, as though chiseled from metal, are as different from the *Simonetta* bust as analogous motives in the same period and in the same artistic environment can possibly be treated. Furthermore, an essential point should not be overlooked: Verrocchio's bust is purely Quattrocentesque with its angularity and even slight indications of *contrapposto*—whereas, the harmoniously floating lines and the simplification in details in the *Simonetta* bust manifest a new artistic vision.

As mentioned in the book of H. Brockhaus (*Ricerche* . . . , 1902) and quoted in my article on page 7, it was A. Warburg who rightly observed the similarity between Simonetta's portrait by Domenico Ghirlandaio and an early drawing by Leonardo in the Uffizi, Florence. This shows the earliest manner of Leonardo; we could quite well imagine that he did it at the age of twenty, or even before, let us say between 1470-1472. This is quite possible, since Simonetta was married in 1469.

Comparing the Uffizi drawing with the marble bust, a difference of several years is evident in the appearance of the model as well as in the stylistic development of the artist. The drawing with all the richness of an extremely complicated coiffure and a diadem-like headdress is as "Quattrocentesque" as the young Leonardo ever could be; whereas the utmost restraint in details in the bust shows the same artist—in my belief—as the creator of the "classic" style of the Cinquecento. This is the wonderful line comparable to that in the Madonna in the *Adoration of the Magi*.

Maybe I suggested too early a date for the bust when I supposed that it was

done before Simonetta's death in 1476. Reconsidering all the circumstances and feeling more and more sure about Leonardo's authorship, I now am inclined to believe that it is possible to assign to the bust a slightly later date of origin: after Simonetta's death but before Giuliano de' Medici's assassination (1478).

If so, the adorable marble bust would not be a portrait from life but a posthumous glorification of the celebrated beauty, a personification of that spiritual concept of immortal beauty, expressed and condensed by the poets of the Medici circle in the name Simonetta.





Fig. 3. LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Bust of a Young Woman*  
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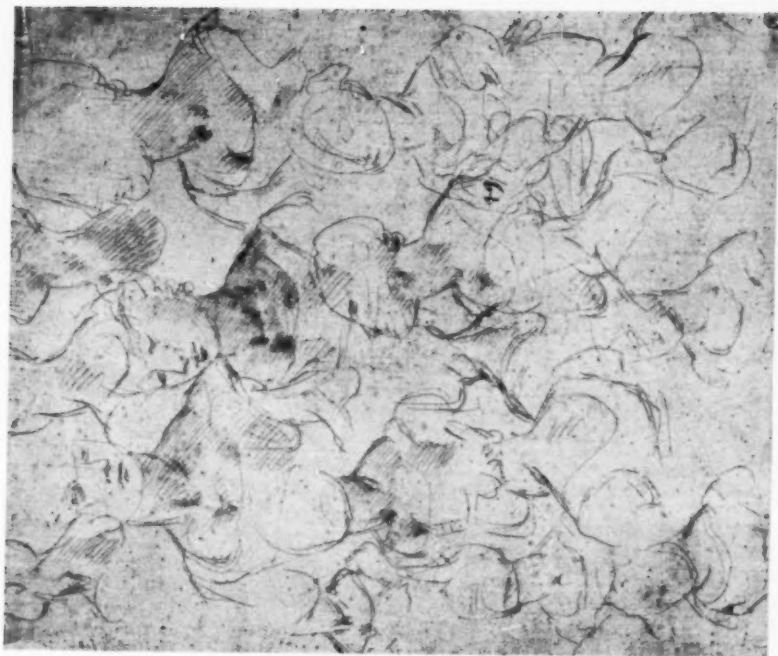


Fig. 4. LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Sheet of Sketches*  
Windsor Castle



RECENT IMPORTANT  
ACQUISITIONS  
OF AMERICAN COLLECTIONS



GASPARI TRAVERSI, *The Quarrel*  
Harford, Conn., Wadsworth Atheneum

## "THE QUARREL" BY GASPARI TRAVERSI

From an article by C. C. Cunningham in the January, 1949,  
*Bulletin of the Wadsworth Atheneum*

In the history of Italian painting, the name of the Neapolitan painter Gaspari Traversi was almost unknown until recent years. Although he is recorded in early documents, his paintings were formerly given to Giuseppe Bonito, Corrado Giaquinto, or Piero Leone Ghezzi, and not until 1927 did Roberto Longhi, the Italian scholar, establish once more for Traversi his true work. His painting may be roughly divided into two categories, religious pictures such as those painted in Neapolitan and Roman churches, and his genre subjects, which were more common and are to be found today in a number of European public and private collections. It is to the latter category that *The Quarrel*, recently acquired by the museum through purchase from the Sumner Fund, belongs. Very little of Traversi's life is known other than that he was active painting in Naples about 1749, that he painted in Rome in 1752/3, and that he died in Naples in 1769. His art stems from the Caravaggisti, the followers of Caravaggio, who employed bold contrasts of light and shade and crowded compositions to intensify the drama and action of a scene.

The subject of the museum's picture, *The Quarrel*, was not uncommon with Traversi and examples are recorded in the collections of Professor Nicolo Castellino, Naples, and formerly in that of the Duc de Trévise, Paris. The spirited design and brilliant coloring of the museum's example, however, is particularly fine and unusual even for Traversi. The expressions of alarm, pain, fright, and anger on the faces of the individuals although perhaps somewhat forced, lend excitement to the scene

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ROMAN (circa A.D. 100), *A Captive Dacian*  
Cambridge, Mass., Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University



and make the painting more dramatic. Especially beautiful is the painting of the clothes of some of the figures, such as the colorful brocaded waistcoat on the man at the left, and the fine red coat of the man drawing a pistol, contrasted with the yellow of the dress of the woman intervening.

It is interesting to speculate how far-reaching was the influence of the Neapolitan genre painters such as Traversi on the painters of English Narrative and Battle pieces. Certainly Neapolitan pictures were known in England and artistic intercourse between the two countries was at its height during the eighteenth century with English artists and patrons making constant visits to Italy. The man at the left, drawing his sword, is quite typical of similar figures in the Battle pictures of Copley, West and Trumbull. The influence of Callot and the Dutch on Hogarth has been generally stressed by writers on the artist, but little or no mention is ever made of the possible influence of the Neapolitan genre painters on Hogarth and the English Narrative painters. This speculation and study, however, is beyond the scope of the present article, but undoubtedly, specific instances could be found.

Traversi's *The Quarrel* is a significant addition to the Museum's collection of baroque art, and is the first large scale Italian genre picture of this type to enter the collection. Not only is it an outstanding example of baroque art, but it is perhaps one of the finest of all the known paintings of Traversi.

#### A CAPTIVE DACIAN

By George M. A. Hanfmann, Curator of Classical Antiquities,  
Fogg Museum of Art

Not unlike the Americans of today the Romans of the Republic had acquired their Imperial commitments with reluctance and



Carlos Casajemas (1900)

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EDGAR DEGAS, *The Morning Ride*  
*Detroit Institute of Arts*

without program. It remained for the Roman Emperors to proclaim as Rome's mission the task of ruling the nations. "To spare the vanquished and to battle down the proud," as Virgil had put it in the *Aeneid*, became a tenet of Roman creed.

The proud, whom the Romans were called upon to battle down, were the great barbarian races always beating like a stormy sea against the ramparts of the Empire. Among the more formidable of the Roman opponents were the Dacians, who occupied a part of the lower Danube valley and the plateaus of Transylvania. United by their great King Decebalus, they wrestled an honorable peace from the Emperor Domitian (A.D. 85-87). A few years later Trajan, the mightiest military commander among the Roman Emperors, had to exercise all his skill in two strenuous campaigns (A.D. 101-102 and 105-106) to reduce them to lasting submission. These victories of Trajan over the Dacians were immortalized as no other Roman triumphs before or after. The most magnificent and most luxurious of all Imperial Fora of Rome, the Forum of Trajan, was built as a monument to the wars against Decebalus. The famous column of Trajan told in relief the dramatic narrative of the two campaigns. Adorning the triumphal arch which served as entrance gate, and placed at intervals in front of the colonnades were colossal statues of captive Dacians—perpetual reminders of the great triumphal procession held at the end of the war.

The Fogg Museum of Harvard University has recently acquired a very fine representation of a captive Dacian. The new piece includes the head and shoulder of a colossal statue of yellowish marble with purple striations (total height preserved: 85 cm; height of head 47 cm).

The bearded barbarian, with long wavy hair and moustache, wears a cloak fastened with a round clasp on his shoulder and a tunic the folds of which are seen just below the neck. His cap

indicates that he belongs to the nobility of his tribe. The position of the shoulder and the level gaze suggest that he was shown standing upright, with his hands tied in front (a posture seen also in the statues of captive Dacians on the Arch of Constantine and in the Museum in Naples, which are thought to come from the Forum of Trajan).

The Roman sculptor has represented the captive enemy as a man of dignity and quiet but forceful determination. His expression varies: he appears more intent and defiant when seen from the right, more subdued and thoughtful when viewed from the front. The parted lips and the slight turn of the head give to the sculptured piece a momentary mood and a living quality. Short runs of drill are used to create an interplay of light and shadow in the hair, while dramatic accents are provided by the darkened corners of the deep-set eyes. In contrast to these pictorial devices are other elements, a surprisingly sensitive modeling of the face especially around the cheeks, and a careful rhythmic arrangement of the hair, that evokes memories of Greek sculpture.

The head in the Fogg Museum has suffered some damage. The entire left shoulder has been sawed off. The tip of the cap, part of the lower lip, the tip of the nose are missing. A rusty square hole in front, a dowel mark and workings in the back, as well as traces of poor gray mortar in some of the folds substantiate the allegation that at some point in its career the piece had been built into the wall of a church or some other building. Slight blurring of the surface combined with light brown deposits rising in parallel lines seem to indicate that it had also been immersed in water. There are other minor blemishes. Yet the Fogg Museum piece is exceptional if not unique among the known heads and statues of Dacians in that there is no evidence of the disfiguring hand of incompetent cleaners and restorers.



"Capriccio"

Francesco Guardi

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BYZANTINE, 10TH CENTURY, *The Death of the Virgin* (ivory)  
Seattle Art Museum



FRENCH, 14TH CENTURY, *The Siege of the  
Castle of Love* (ivory)  
Seattle Art Museum

No definite information is available concerning the history and origin of the new Dacian. Statues of barbarians were widely used in the art of the Roman Empire, usually as decoration of state buildings. In Corinth, for instance, the American excavators found a portico in which statues of barbarians were employed to carry the entablature. We have mentioned their use on triumphal arches and in the upper story of the colonnades of the Forum of Trajan. These were not, however, the only buildings that included statues portraying captive Dacians. One of the best-known Dacian heads came from the site of Portus Traiani, the harbor built by Trajan near Ostia, which we may therefore presume also boasted a building with such statues. Professor K. Lehmann, furthermore, has pointed out in a letter that the Emperor Domitian, too, celebrated a triumph after his war against the Dacians. The style of the Fogg Museum head, in Professor Lehmann's view, might point to the time of Domitian rather than that of Trajan.

Certain it is that a sculpture of this size and eminent quality must have belonged to a major Imperial monument. A comparison of this head with other portraits of the Dacians has revealed one interesting coincidence. The dimensions of the face agree very closely with the dimensions of the Dacian heads in the Vatican and the Hermitage, which on the basis of old excavation accounts have been assigned to the triumphal arch in the Forum of Trajan (A.D. 116). The style of these pieces is, however, quite different, for they are sculptured in a broader, coarser manner with incised pupils of the eyes and strongly raised eyebrows. Indeed, some scholars have assigned them to the period of the Emperor Hadrian, who may have put the finishing touches to the Forum of his predecessor, Trajan. The sculptor of the Fogg Museum head was certainly working in the manner of an earlier day, but it is quite possible to find parallels for



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this finer style among the monuments from the earlier years of the reign of Trajan. Would it be rash to say that this artist persisted in the earlier style even when other younger sculptors were exploring new paths?

Whatever the ultimate solutions of these problems of origin and date—and they may, perhaps, never be solved with complete certainty—the new Dacian deserves an important place in the study of one of the favorite themes of Roman sculpture. A great sculptor has here shown us the enemy as the Romans saw him in their proudest hour—not as a mean and despicable creature but as a proud and noble opponent, a worthy symbol of that vast barbarian world which in the end was to engulf the Empire and was to form the nations of modern Europe.

#### A SKETCH BY DEGAS IN THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

By Paul L. Grigaut

One day some fifty years ago Renoir was standing in front of a still-life by Cézanne with his friend Maurice Denis, the religious painter. Renoir was fond of Cézanne, whose paintings he often admired. Turning to Denis: "Cet animal-là," he exclaimed admiringly, "cet animal-là, he could not put two daubs of paint on a canvas without making a great painting out of it." This is a slender anecdote (yet, among anecdotes of painting and painters, it has the rare advantage of being true); and the Institute unfortunately owns no Cézanne painting to which I might apply Renoir's *mot*. But I could not help remember it when Degas' *Morning Ride* was acquired a few weeks ago for the Detroit Institute of Arts' French galleries: on this rather large canvas there is not much more than Renoir's two daubs of paint, and yet this sketch is a great painting, a worthy addition

to the other works of art acquired through the Ralph H. Booth Fund.

When Degas died, blind and almost friendless, he was, as he had wanted to be, "famous and unknown." He had stopped exhibiting many years before and was living the life of a recluse in his Montmartre studio, watched over and protected from visitors by the traditional and exasperating servant whom one meets so often in old artists' lives. Yet he was famous. There was a *légende Degas*, that of a bitter, secretive old man of genius whose paintings, when sold at auction, reached the high prices which we associate with genius—recognized genius—and whose studio was filled with thousands of canvases.

Soon after Degas' death his heirs decided to sell this accumulation of works, which formed the largest part of the painter's *œuvre*. There were classical scenes and portraits, today world famous, in which Degas showed himself a worthy pupil of Ingres. There were copies after the old masters and splendid drawings which for years this other "old man mad with drawing" (as Hokusai, one of the painter's gods, called himself) had kept hidden even from his closest friends. There were also several hundred studies on canvas, such as the *Morning Ride*, purposely left unfinished, or discarded by one of the most fastidious artists who ever lived.

The Institute already owns several works by Degas: two dancers (a pastel and a famous small oil), a typical nude and a portrait, the latter the gift of Ralph H. Booth twenty years ago. These represent all the phases of the master's talent but one: for many Degas is the painter of horses as much as the painter of ballerinas, and the *Morning Ride* fills this gap. The subject is banal. At the seaside, somewhere near Etretat or Le Tréport, three people on horseback, a woman in quaint Eugénie hat, an old bearded man and a boy, are leisurely coming towards us;



Kuan Yin of Fukien Ware  
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from the left a fourth rider appears, his horse cut in two as in a Japanese print by the edge of the canvas. But the *raison d'être* of the *Morning Ride* is that it is a study of contrasts and a composition in space, as abstract in its own way as Picasso's famous *Horse and Rider* (of which, incidentally, the boy's pony reminds us strongly). The painting is divided in two sections, the unfinished ground green mottled with black, the unfinished sky showing the brown preparation. The unexpected harmony of bitter green and muddy brown, the strange unbalanced, off-center composition, the wavy, complex lines which suggest in a Daumier-like pattern the amble of horses, all possess the eerie, fantastic quality of objects seen in a dream. Every detail gives an impression of something never seen before, and yet vaguely familiar and disturbing, and betrays the personality of a deeply original painter who, painting for himself, might have adopted D. H. Lawrence's motto: "Art for my sake." Like a pure scientist, Degas was less interested in the final solution of his problem than in the problem itself: how to suggest with lines what the Impressionists wanted to express with color—congealed motion. There is in *Faust* a beautiful and famous line: "... Augenblick ... verweile doch ... ! du bist so schön." In his own language, this is, I believe, what Degas attempted to express.

#### TWO MEDIEVAL IVORIES IN THE SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

By Sherman E. Lee

Among the medieval objects in the Donald E. Frederick Memorial Collection recently presented to the Seattle Art Museum by Mrs. Donald E. Frederick are two outstanding ivories, one Byzantine, the other Gothic. Like all of the objects in the collection, they have been selected because of their re-

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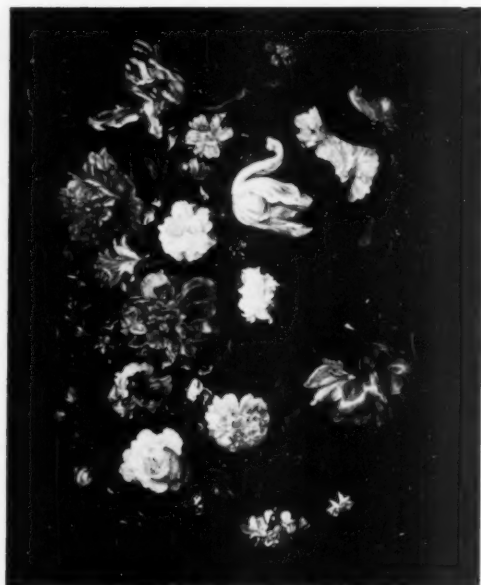
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markable quality and because they are typical of their period and style.

The Byzantine plaque from an ivory triptych represents the *Koimesis* or *Death of the Virgin*, a favorite subject of the Eastern Church. It is  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches by  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches and has been published by A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann (*Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, II, 1934, pl. LX; perhaps the most remarkable *Koimesis* is that in the Cluny Museum) and exhibited by the Walters Art Gallery (*Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, 1947, pl. XXIX). It comes from the collections of Reber, Mannheim; Zinser, Stuttgart; Otto Kahn and Brummer, New York. The traces of color remaining on the surface may be of a somewhat later origin than the ivory itself. This *Koimesis* was dated by Goldschmidt at the end of the tenth century as a member of the Triptych Group and related to the Nicephorus Group. Morey's review of Goldschmidt and Weitzmann (*Art Bulletin*, Sept., 1935, pp. 404, 405) designates the Nicephorus Group as slightly later, in the eleventh century. Fortunately, there can be no question as to the beautiful quality of the plaque. The hieratic and abstract character of the second Byzantine Golden Age is clear in the formal assumptions of the representation.

This formality is modified in detail, for the heads of the fifteen mourning figures are characterized by a gentle, but deeply emotional touch. The continuous narrative scheme can be seen in the flight of the angel, shown to the left as he comes to receive the soul of the Virgin from Christ and again as he carries the soul to Heaven. The slack chains of the swinging censer are portrayed with more than casual observation.

A French or English ivory mirror-back of the fourteenth century, formerly in the collections of Baron Gustave de Rothschild, Paris; Baroness Lambert, Brussels; and Rosenberg and



Flowers by Ernst van Stuyen (1657-1712)

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Stiebel, New York, provides a sharp contrast to the abstract and theological emphasis of the Byzantine ivory. This Gothic ivory is 4¼ inches high and depicts a chivalric and secular subject, *The Siege of the Castle of Love* from *Le Roman de la Rose*, the popular medieval French poem begun by Guillaume de Lorris and finished by Jean de Meung about 1280. A mirror-back, with a similar scene, but with lions rather than wyverns at the corners is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (see J. Evans, *Art in Medieval France*, 1948, pl. 174).

The composition is informal, though based on symmetry. In the foreground mounted knights are shown in battle and from the castle the ladies throw roses in a token defense. Two knights climb on trees to the battlements, one offering his sword, hilt foremost, in surrender. One knight, without armor, has pierced the defenses and stands embracing one of the fair defenders. The whole scene is conceived in a lively and charming fashion with especial attention to the heads with their knowledgeable Gothic smiles. The four beasts (wyverns?) at the corners provide the transition from roundel to square.

It is characteristic of these medieval *objets d'art* to provide within their small scale a marvelous visual reference library for costumes and customs of the day. Detail by detail, secular medieval life, as conceived by the chivalric mind, is unfolded before us. Where the *Koimesis* leads us into the world of a theological mystery, the *Siege* carries us to a wonderland where all knights are heroes and all ladies fair.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF ART

*Painting and Sculpture in The Museum of Modern Art*, edited by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1948. 328 pp., 380 pls. \$5.50 (cloth binding).

The Museum of Modern Art's publications set a standard—of excellence of format, completeness, timeliness—that fills, or should fill, other museum staffs with envy and emulation. It is now five years since the first edition of this catalogue appeared. It is true that this museum's permanent collection changes more rapidly than is usual. Its vigorous acquisition policy and its no less vigorous policy of elimination either because a work is no longer judged to be "modern" or no longer thought sufficiently significant, make for a rapid alteration of the collection that would dismay most museum staffs. In fact, this degree of change would probably be taken by most administrations as a reason why no comprehensive catalogue should be attempted. Yet how much of the usefulness of a museum collection is lost for lack of a catalogue! We have to be doubly grateful, therefore, for Mr. Barr's scholarly energy and determination in keeping this indispensable publication up to date.

The plan of this is the same followed in the previous issue. It is really a picture book, followed by a check list.

*The Marmon Memorial Collection of Paintings*, John Herron Art Museum. Art Association of Indianapolis, 1948. 40 pp., 8 color pls.

The Marmon Memorial gift brought to Indianapolis eight paintings of outstanding quality which are published in this pamphlet, with text and catalogue by Blanche Stillson. The earliest in date is a Corneille de Lyon *Man with a Glove* from the Pierpont Morgan collection. Then come four Dutch seventeenth century pictures: Cuyt's *Valkhof at Nijmegen* (from King George V of Hanover and the Duke of Brunswick collections); Jacob van Ruisdael's *Cascade* (Hofstede de Groot, no. 265; Rosenberg, no. 217, once in the Demidoff collection); the "Trevor" *Landscape* by Hobbema, from the Pierpont Morgan collection (Hofstede de Groot, no. 87); and a fine Willem Kalf. Finally there are three examples of the nineteenth century: Cézanne's *House in Provence*, painted 1885-86 (Venturi, no. 433); a superb Van Gogh, *Landscape at Saint-Rémy* of 1889, from the Mendelssohn-Bartholdy collection, Berlin; and Seurat's exquisite and impeccable *Port of Gravelines*. Some of these have already been noticed in this magazine, but this convenient publication of the group is welcome. The Marmon Memorial is a noble benefaction to the city of Indianapolis, an example of intelligent and generous civic spirit on the highest level, which well deserves to be recorded in this way.

Four Picture Books: No. 1. *Twenty Portraits*; No. 2. *Twenty Landscapes*; No. 3. *Twenty Narrative Pictures*; No. 4. *Twenty Old Masters*. Liverpool: Walker Art Gallery, 1947-1948. Each 1/6.

These four paper-bound picture books, in an attractive format, offer a useful survey of the collections at Liverpool. The first three are devoted to three phases of English painting of which Liverpool has an unusually rich and interesting collection. The Emma G. Holt bequest of 1945 and a series of interesting purchases from the Wavertree bequest make the recent growth of this gallery notable and we recommend these picture books to American students.

The fourth picture book marks the official donation to the Walker Art Gallery of the Roscoe collection, which has been in deposit there since 1893. William Roscoe (1753-1831) was a figure in the fine flowering of intellectual and cultural life in the English provinces which occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, before the rise of railroads drew English life to a center in London. Roscoe must have been the earliest English collector of Italian and Flemish "primitives." To buy, in the later years of the eighteenth century, important works by Simone Martini, Ercole de Roberti and the Master of the Virgo inter Virgines was a remarkable achievement of taste and intellectual independence.

*Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunst Sammlungen*. Vol. I. Hamburg: Ernst Hanswedell, 1948. 64 pp., 36 illus.

This volume, edited by Peter Wilhelm Meister in conjunction with Carl Georg Heise and Erich Meyer, is a gratifying indication of the reviving life of the German museums. It contains articles and publications on fields as widely varying as modern German painting and sculpture, Seljuk metalwork and Chinese prints. The contents are: an article by Carl Georg Heise, director of the Kunsthalle (who did distinguished work in Lübeck before the Nazi era) on the contemporary German sculpture which the Kunsthalle is now acquiring; an address by Wolfgang Schöne at the opening of the Max Beckmann exhibit held by the Kunstverein in 1947; an unrecorded *Scholar's Still-Life* by Gerard Dou, dated 1643, published by Diedrich Roskamp; an article by Wolf Stubbe attributing an anonymous German romantic portrait group to the Stuttgart painter Johann Friedrich Dieterich; the publication by Kurt Dingelstedt of a rock crystal and coral crucifix, acquired in Würzburg for the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, which illustrates the persistence of German late Gothic mannerism as late as 1600; and articles on Stambuch illustrations by Lieselotte Möller, on a Seljuk silver basin by Kurt Erdmann, on a Coptic textile by Eugen von Mercklin, on Chinese woodcuts in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe by Peter Wilhelm Meister, and a Chinese porcelain by Martin Feddersen. Brief reviews of the activities of 1945-47 of the Kunsthalle, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Kunstverein, Freunde der Kunsthalle and Kunstgewerbeverein bring the volume to a close.

*Catalogo de los Cuadros*, Museo del Prado. Madrid, 1949.

This new issue of the catalogue of paintings in the Prado has a foreword by F. J. Sanchez Canton, who apparently prepared this edition. The most interesting additions since the edition of 1945 are a *Crucifixion* by Velasquez, signed and dated 1631, and a group of additional tapestry cartoons by Goya.

JOHN POPE-HENNESSY, *A Lecture on Nicholas Hilliard*. London: Home and Van Thal, Ltd., 1949. 29 pp. text, 32 pls. 10s 6d.

Transferred to paper, the texts of lectures often become dull and trite. But that is far from being the case with this essay, which evidently Mr. Pope-Hennessy carefully revised for publication. This 29-page booklet is not only a lecture on Nicholas Hilliard and an introduction to the history of miniature portrait painting in the sixteenth century, it is also a study of mannerism, which the author calls "a reaction against the classicism of the

Italian Renaissance" creating "a sophisticated court art with a strong anti-nationalistic bias and an over-riding interest in form." Such felicitous definitions give the key-note of this pamphlet, which has the additional advantage of being extremely well illustrated, not only with enlarged photographs of Hilliard's miniatures but also with carefully chosen comparative material running all the way from a plate from Vinciolo's . . . *ouvrages de lingerie* to a drawing by Goltzius.

*Bulletin de la Société Poussin*, No. 2. Paris, 1948. 95 pp. text & illus.

The second Bulletin of the Société Poussin, complete in itself, maintains the high standard set by the first *Cahier*. Like its predecessor it is given almost entirely to studies on Poussin. The large *Santa Margherita* from the Turin Pinacoteca is commented upon briefly by Roberto Longhi who, differing from Grautoff, re-attributes it to Poussin and publishes the engraving by Chauveau after the painting, while the theme of the Annunciation "en tant que thème dynamoplastique," is discussed rather ponderously by Mr. Rudrauf in relation to the Poussin *Annunciation*. The Poussin *Ariadne and Bacchus* (American private collection), dated 1635 by Grautoff, is convincingly attributed to a much earlier date (around 1620) by Mr. Dorival who, somewhat less convincingly, considers the almost ruined Madrid *Bacchanal* as being the earliest in date of Poussin's *Bacchanals* (about 1628). The most important contributions in this issue, however, are those of Martin Davies and Mlle. Bertin-Mouroit. Mr. Davies' essay on "Francisco Millet," copiously illustrated, even more copiously documented, is a masterful digression, logically enough based on the Théodore engravings, on a painter whose works it is difficult to study. In her "Addenda" to the Grautoff catalogue Mlle. Bertin-Mouroit lists (with a complete bibliography) 41 paintings unknown to Grautoff in 1914, certain of which, according to Miss Mouroit, are among "les plus sublimes chefs-d'oeuvre de Poussin." It is interesting to note that at least 10 of the works listed in the "Addenda" are in America.

TAHSIN OZ, *Türk Kumas ve Kadiefeleri* (Turkish woven fabrics and velvets). Vol. I: 14th to 16th century. Istanbul, 1946. Reviewed by Adele Coulin Weibel.

Bay Tahsin Oz, the director of the Topkapu Sarayı Müzesi of Istanbul, begins herewith the long awaited publication of the textile treasures preserved there. The costumes and hangings, beautifully shown on 36 plates, twelve of which are in colors and gold, date from the fourteenth to the end of the sixteenth century. Several contemporary miniatures show how on gala occasions these costly fabrics were spread on the road leading to the palace, or held up by servants to form barriers on either side of the way. The Turkish text (110 pages) is followed by indices in English, French and German; a complete English translation is promised. A second volume will shortly appear. It is to be hoped that this beautiful manual of the Turkish historic textiles will be followed by one dealing with the Mamluk costumes which are also preserved at the Topkapu Sarayı Müzesi.

WALTER PACH, *The Art Museum in America*. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1948. 300 pp. text, 62 illus.

The first thing which impressed this reviewer when reading Mr. Pach's latest book was the author's enthusiasm, based on the theory that "there is infinitely more to the museum than its role as a preserver of old values," and that "a far greater role is

its (the museum's) capacity for clarifying—almost for creating—our conception of art."

Mr. Pach's new book is composed of two sections: a short history of the development of American museums, which includes few unfamiliar facts (but stresses rightly the influence of American painters upon the evolution of taste) and a much longer section, which is really a résumé of the author's ideas "on art museums" and, of course, on art. Such a vast subject lends itself to valuable digressions or to ramblings; that Mr. Pach is content with digressions is not one of the lesser *tour de force* of *The Art Museum in America*. The long chapter on "Recent Accessions," for instance, which might have been trite or dry, contains a wealth of anecdotes which could find no place in a dignified catalogue of paintings but which will be helpful to future scholars. And, in passing, throughout the three hundred pages of the book Mr. Pach gives vent to a long series of pet ideas, most of which happen to be also this reviewer's, such as the rehabilitation of Morse, Rimmer or Maurice Prendergast; the poor representation of Delacroix in our museums; a plea (almost a *leit motif* of the book really) for the recognition of a "supremely great achievement": the art of the early American Indian. It is only rarely indeed that one can disagree with Mr. Pach; does he not go too far, however, when comparing unfavorably Tuckerman to Dunlap? Or apparently emphasizing the importance of arms and armor, almost to the detriment of the graphic arts? Or is it only that his pet ideas at times are not ours?

To discuss Mr. Pach's theories in detail, or even to mention all of them, is of course impossible here. Perhaps the best way of demonstrating the importance of *The Art Museum in America*, its broad catchall value, is to quote a few of Mr. Pach's aphorisms, with the hope that to separate them from their context will not be too great a betrayal:

"It is not the first business of art museums to be 'educational'; and it is not their business primarily to teach: there are schools, colleges and universities to do that." "If our museums can be built up only of the few great collections still in the homes of magnates, then the urgent need of museums is to achieve an ability to do by collective action (of the directors of museums) what our magnates did for their personal pleasure." "It is not too much to say that the Modern Museum is the greatest mistake the Metropolitan ever made." "The buying of a work of art far below the masterpiece class may be of great importance for the understanding of a historical evolution." "Part of the problem of the museum is to be attractive when people feel like turning to it, but not shrilly to solicit attention from those who are busy with useful and absorbing affairs of their own." "Art objects in his (the artist's) studio may be as much a part of his equipment as are paints and brushes." I wish I could quote in full the section on Period rooms (pp. 126-130). "There is a lot of hope for no end of people and things in America, if you consider how much we have done so far," concludes Mr. Pach; after reading *The Art Museum in America*, cultured laymen and art curators, for whom the book was written, will share more than ever the author's optimism.

Hokusai, 1760-1849. London: British Museum, 1948.

Preceded by a sensitive introduction by Basil Gray, this catalogue of an exhibition held on the occasion of the centenary of Hokusai's death describes more than two hundred kakemonos, woodcuts, drawings and books, thus making it possible for the first time in England "to view the whole range of Hokusai's work." Reproduced are several line and ink drawings formerly in the Ricketts and Shannon, and William Anderson collections. An important reference work.



*The Penguin Modern Painters*: "Ben Nicholson" by John Summerson; "Frances Hodgkins" by Myfanwy Evans; "William Nicholson" by Robert Nichols. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1948.

Under the editorship of Sir Kenneth Clark, this series of *Modern Painters* is especially valuable to us in America, since it may well be said to introduce to the American public, in an attractive form, the works of many of the leading painters of today. The text is quite short, and is usually confined to biographies; the greater part of the book is made up of colored and black-and-white reproductions of representative work. These colored reproductions, this reviewer feels, are the most successful found today in inexpensive art books. Among the numberless "collections," which are even more common in Europe than in the United States, these *Penguin Modern Painters* stand out, both for their text and their presentation.

*Nine Lives*. New York: The Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, 1949.

Catalogue of an exhibition, "The Cat in History and in Art," held at Cooper Union early in 1949. Comprised of books, ceramics, metalwork, paintings and wallpapers among other

things, it included some 250 objects, ranging from Oliver Herford's *Rubāiyāt of a Persian Kitten* to a "souvenir of the first New York performance of *Charley's Aunt*," but also greater works of art such as Winslow Homer's *View of Paris* or a *Death of Buddha* of the Kamakura period. Mr. Hathaway and his staff deserve to be congratulated not only for what was the most original and charming show of this winter but also for making Cooper Union, as was exemplified by this unpretentious but actually quite scholarly exhibition, the modern and "human" place it has become.

*De Gustibus* . . . Washington, D. C., Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1949.

Catalogue of "An Exhibition of American Painting illustrating a century of taste and criticism." Based on an interesting idea, which it must have been difficult to "put across": a comparison of actual works of art and quotations from contemporary and later criticism, thus illustrating "the basic trends and tastes" in American painting of the period 1830-1930. It is gratifying to see the Corcoran Gallery add a careful historical study of American Art to its previous pre-occupation with contemporary painting.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Ralph Schwabe, *Degas: The Draughtsman*. London: Art Trade Press, Ltd., 1948. 44 illus. 21s.

R. O. Dunlap, *Understanding Pictures*. New York: Pitman Publishing Corp., 1948. 55 pp., 12 black and white illus., 8 color pls. \$3.00.

Ray Bethers, *Pictures, Painters and You*. New York: Pitman Publishing Corp., 1948. 277 pp. \$5.00.

Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, an Illustrated Index*. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1949. 266 pp.

Samuel Hazzard Gross, *Mediaeval Russian Churches*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1949. 90 pp. text.

Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Lucrezia Borgia*. London: Phaidon Publishers, Inc., 1948. 112 illus. \$2.50.

D. Edzard. Introduction by Gerg Muchsam. New York: H. Bittner & Co., 1948. 110 pls. \$7.50.

Stephen G. C. Ensko, *American Silversmiths and Their Marks III*. Privately printed New York: Robert Ensko, Inc., 1948. 285 pp. \$15.00.

Frederick Hartt, *Florentine Art Under Fire*. Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1949. 147 pp. text and illus. \$5.00.

Oliver Simon, *Introduction to Typography*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, n.d. 137 pp. text and illus. \$3.00.

*Dutch Indoor Subjects*. Introduction and notes by Tancred Borenius. The Pitman Gallery. New York and London: Pitman Publishing Corp., 1949. 10 color pls.

Paul Jamot, *Poussin*. Paris: Librairie Floury, 1948. 89 pp. text, 143 illus.

Frederick S. Wright, *Milestones of American Painting in our Century*. New York: Chanticleer Press, 1949. 134 pp. text, 50 illus., 12 in color.

*Building for Modern Man*, ed. by Thomas H. Creighton. Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1949. 219 pp. \$3.50.

*Die Meister Französischer Malerei der Gegenwart*, ed. by Maurice Jardot and Kurt Martin. Baden-Baden: Woldemar Klein, 1948. 55 pp. text, 42 pls.

*The Penguin Modern Painters*: "Paul Nash" by Herbert Read; "David Jones" by Robin Ironside. Middlesex, England, Penguin Books, 1948-49.

Gordon Russell, *The Things We See, No. 3: Furniture*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1947. 64 pp. text and illus. 2s 6d.

Bernard Hollowood, *The Things We See, No. 4: Pottery and Glass*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1947. 64 pp. text and illus. 2s 6d.

Tamara Talbot Rice, *Russian Art* (Pelican Books). Middlesex, England, Penguin Books, 1949. 275 pp. text and illus. 2s 6d.

Leonard Adam, *Primitive Art*. Revised and enlarged ed. (Pelican Books). Middlesex, England, Penguin Books, 1949. 270 pp. text and illus. 2s 6d.

*Great Chinese Painters of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties*. A loan exhibition for the benefit of the Asia Institute. New York: Wildenstein, 1949. 71 pp. text and illus.

*L'Imagerie Populaire*. A loan exhibition catalogue. New York: Cultural Division of the French Embassy, 1949.

*Contemporary American Painting*. Exhibition catalogue, University of Illinois, 1949. 91 black and white pls. 1 color pl.



